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From *inércia* to *inertia*
Drawing on the Travel Experience

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I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, Maria and Antonio Vieira. Without their journey to, and sacrifice as, Portuguese immigrants in the Unites States, I would not have had the opportunity to become immersed in a new non-native language, and would not have embarked on my own long journey towards this Master degree in Translation

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RESUMO

O objectivo deste trabalho de projecto, a tradução para inglês americano do livro de viagens ilustrado *inércia* (2013), de André Carrilho, acompanhada de um ensaio em que analiso as minhas próprias estratégias e opções como tradutora, visa, em última instância, a publicação do livro nos Estados Unidos da América e/ou no Reino Unido. A tarefa envolveu a elaboração de um comentário não apenas do meu processo de tradução, mas igualmente do rico conteúdo do próprio livro, o qual pode ser lido e discutido à luz de várias abordagens teóricas — globalização, pós-colonialismo e a condição pós-pós-moderna.

O trabalho de projecto inclui informação introdutória sobre o autor e o texto de partida, uma explicação da metodologia seguida e a versão final do texto de chegada. Explora e reflecte ainda sobre as bases teóricas do corpo do trabalho, especificamente no que diz respeito ao autor enquanto escritor de viagens — alguém que, afinal, tal como um tradutor, interpreta o Outro e molda a perpectiva que uma cultura tem de outra.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: tradução, escrita de viagem portuguesa contemporânea, André Carrilho, globalização, pós-colonialismo, pós-pós-modernismo, desafios e estratégias de tradução

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work-project, the translation into American English of André Carrilho's illustrated travel book in the form of a diary, *inertia* (2013), accompanied by an essay analyzing my own strategies and choices as translator, is to ultimately support the publishing of the book in the United States and/or in the United Kingdom. The task involved a commentary not only of my translation process, but also of the book's rich content itself, as it can be read and discussed in the light of various theoretical approaches – globalization, post-colonialism and the post postmodern condition.

The work-project contains introductory information on the author and the source text, an explanation of the methodology followed and the final target text in translation. It further explores and elaborates on the theoretical bases for the body of the work, specifically with regards to the author as travel writer — someone who, after all, like a translator, interprets the Other and shapes the perspective one culture has of another.

KEYWORDS: translation, contemporary Portuguese travel writing, André Carrilho, globalization, post-colonialism, post postmodernism, translation challenges and strategies

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1. Introduction: The Journey Begins

Tinha de ser, é sempre assim, que raiva. Ando numa ânsia de registos, fotografias, desenhos, vídeos, textos.

André Carrilho, *inércia*

[It had to be, it's always like that, infuriating. I'm in a documentation frenzy, photographs, drawings, videos, texts.]

Sometime during the summer of 2015, my good friend, the Portuguese illustrator André Carrilho, invited me to lunch on a Sunday afternoon in Lisbon. I have known André for many years, having met him in New York where I live part-time. We'd been introduced by mutual friends, and I no longer recall who it was who introduced us, but our friendship has stood the test of time and distance. Both previously avid travelers, some would say nomads, we have spent many hours, over many dinners and wine, with many international friends, having many memorable conversations over the past ten years or so. These encounters have taken place in Lisbon, our mutually native city; New York, where I grew up and lived most of my life, and several other locations where our paths may have crossed. Sometime during lunch, André very matter-of-factly asked me if I would like to translate a book he'd written, from Portuguese into English. And I very matter-of-factly said, of course, I'd be honored and, in fact, was going to be starting a Masters in Translation program at NOVA University, so perhaps I could do it as my final work-project. And that is pretty much how this journey began. A journey that has already taken me around the virtual globe and through a labyrinth of theories and challenges. And so, in a sense, you could say that I didn't choose this text, this text chose me, and that my friend André Carrilho and I embarked on a journey into this translation project together, on that Sunday afternoon in Lisbon.

1.1 The Author

Quando muito serei um nómada. Esse não faz turismo nem viaja. A sua casa está espraiada, estica-se por alguns sítios familiares. E volta a eles regularmente, ao sabor dos elementos.

André Carrilho, *inércia*

[If anything, I'm a nomad. That's neither a tourist nor a traveler. His home is expansive, it stretches across some familiar sites. And he returns to them regularly, goes where the wind blows.]

André Carrilho is a Portuguese-born illustrator whose mother is Portuguese and whose father is Mozambican. He was born in Lisbon in 1974, the year of The Carnation Revolution (the event that marked the end of the Salazarian regime (1933 – 1974) in Portugal, and of the Portuguese colonial project). His father first came to Portugal to study architecture from Pemba, Mozambique, and met his mother, also an architectural student, at the Faculdade de Arquitectura in Lisbon. His maternal family roots originate from the Beira Alta in the International Douro region of Portugal. From the beginning, Carrilho was an international child, as he is a child of mixed African and European races, and was conceived in Stockholm. Prior to his birth, his maternal grandfather was also stationed in Angola, Africa and in Goa, India, first as a major and then a coronel, as part of the Portuguese colonizing forces. However, he was also an anti-monarchic and anti-clerical Republican and some of these traces and influences can be found in Carrilho's book as for example in the passage when he states:

> Eu sou cada vez mais ateu militante, mas que acredita na tolerância entre credos. Sabendo perfeitamente que um credo tem sempre uma base de intolerância aos outros credos. No entanto quanto mais passo fronteiras e verifico que as coisas que nos unem são tantas mais do que as que nos separam mais começo a ficar impaciente com bairrismos, clubismos e nacionalismos, regionalismos e ismos que mais se assemelham a istmos, estrangulamentos cada vez mais apertados que dificultam a passagem livre de um aperto de mão a um abraço, normalmente entre pessoas tão semelhantes nas suas diferenças. (Carrilho 110)
>
> [I am more and more of a militant atheist, but one who believes in tolerance for all creeds. Knowing full well that a creed always has a fundamental intolerance for all other creeds. Nevertheless, the more I cross borders and note that the things that unite us are much more numerous than those that separate us, the more intolerant I become of parochialisms, factionalisms and nationalisms, regionalisms and isms that more closely resemble isthmuses, ever tighter strangulations that make it difficult to naturally go from a handshake to a hug among people who are so similar in their differences.]

Here we can clearly see his resistance to any type of formal system which is organized by ideology and hierarchy, whether religious or political. On the other hand, at the time of writing, Carrilho is a young man, living in an urban environment, in Lisbon, and therefore, by default, has an "ideological self-location" (Hulme and Youngs 89) which is, in his case, metropolitan; he belongs to the cultural elite, both within the country and abroad. Most notably, he illustrates regularly for the *Diário de Notícias* in Portugal, *The Independent* in the UK and *Vanity Fair* in the US.

1.2 The Source Text

An object that is at rest will stay at rest unless a force acts upon it. An object that is in motion will not change its velocity unless a force acts upon it.

Isaac Newton

The law of inertia — the idea that when an object is in motion it remains in motion, and when at rest it remains at rest — is what gives the book its title and, for Carrilho personally, in Lisbon it is a feeling that when he is there, he is at rest, has no desire to leave; however, when he is elsewhere, in motion, he has no desire to return. His fatigue with being in constant motion is visible when he writes: "Não tenho de saber o que procurar, tenho de perceber quando não procuro e acarinhar esses momentos. E isso acontece sempre que me sento e calmamente inspiro o que me rodeia, exalando um desenho." (Carrilho 119) [I don't have to know what to look for, I have to be aware of when I am not looking and caress those moments. And that always happens when I sit down, calmly inhaling my surroundings, exhaling a drawing.]

This book, *inércia* in the original (2013), *inertia* in English, is Carrilho's first venture into writing. It was both drawn and written in chronological order, but some of the countries were visited more than once, notably some of the ex-colonies, Pemba and Maputo in Mozambique, Macau in China, and Goa in India. It is a reflection of his experiences and thought processes while observing and documenting, through drawing, his various subjects during his travels. Initially, he was inspired by a desire to visit family members in some of these former Portuguese colonies, to understand the Portuguese influence in these places, intending only to, literally, draw on his experiences. Later, during the process itself, writing aligned itself with drawing to become an expression of his desire to extract himself temporarily from the grip of new media and technology, the systemic tools of globalization. Only upon completion does he realize that he was also finding an outlet for his restlessness; that he was attempting to remain in motion, when in fact he had everything he needed for self-development back home in Lisbon. In this sense, the book is at once a journey into Carrilho's mind and thought processes, and a journey through physical space; an internal as well as external journey and, as such, it works on various levels as a literary travel book. Before specifying exactly how it can be considered as such, it is useful here to review the modern concept of Travel Writing.

Despite being a notoriously difficult style to define, taking on characteristics of forms and genres as disparate as diary, letter, guidebook, essay, short story, etc., at times straddling the line between fact and fiction, memory and imagination, according to Tim Youngs, in his excellent *Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, "A near-consensus has developed that travel writing is a mixed form that feeds off other genres." (Youngs 6) More specifically, Jan Borm, who does not consider it a genre but a "[…] collective term for a variety of texts both predominantly fictional and non-fictional whose main theme is travel." (Borm 13), attempts a general definition of the travel book as: "[…] any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming or presupposing that author, narrator and principle character are but one and identical." (Borm 17) In addition, seen from the perspective of the writer/reader, or the human element within the written form, Casey Blanton remarks: "Travel books are vehicles whose main purpose is to introduce us to the other, and […] an engagement between self and the world." (Blanton xi)

So, to sum up, a travel book can be many genres or take on many forms, while at the same time maintaining its primary function of relating the narrator and reader to the 'other' encountered during the journey. For our purposes here, in addressing Carrilho's book directly, I will place it squarely in the literary tradition of diary/journal travel writing.

In her introduction to *Women, Travel Writing and Truth*, Clare Broome Saunders states that travel writing is

> […] travelogues, journalistic reports, autobiographies, diaries, letters, novels, short stories and guidebooks. Truth is at the heart of all these generic distinctions: the assumed authenticity and greater honesty of a personal diary or correspondence which records personal experiences […]. (Saunders 1)

Truth is also at the heart of how *inércia* traces Carrilho's evolution from a mere traveler to someone in fact engaging his 'self' with the world at large, as a way of questioning and discovering parts of said self which only reveal themselves at moments and through people he encounters on his journey. *inércia* belongs to a tradition that started with the late 18th century subjective turn in travel writing, wherein the writer focuses inward rather than simply recounting his observations. In Carrilho's case, it is the beginning of his journey into his own

deep engagement with his environment, and takes him around the world, and around the word (via his illustrations), and back again.

But what makes Carrilho's book not only a travel book but a 'literary' travel book? According to Carl Thompson, "Style is […] as important as content in these texts […] Often, for example, these accounts are underpinned, either explicitly or implicitly, by the mythic motif of the quest. Thus, the travel book typically begins with the narrator setting out from his or her home, either in search of some specific goal or else generally seeking adventures, new experiences and interesting stories […] the narrator undergoes important, possibly life-changing experiences, before returning home to be reintegrated into his or her own society." (Thompson 9-17)

Originally, Carrilho set out to simply visit some relatives and friends living in some of the ex-Portuguese colonies. Shortly into his journey however, he decided to document his trips and visits on Facebook as a way of keeping his other family and friends back home in Lisbon informed of his whereabouts and experiences. Not long after he started documenting, however, he began to feel a strong reaction to the fleeting and impersonal nature of such a type of digital documentation, and opted instead to write about his journey and illustrate his experiences by hand using traditional journalistic forms.

In order to arrive at his 'destination', or back at a deeper connection to himself and to what awaits him back home, Carrilho questions himself and his hyper-technological experiences along the way. He begins to veer from his original plan of posting his musings and drawings on a digital platform such as Facebook, and returns to a more analogue style in the form of his manual illustrations which are accompanied by his words.

Blanton describes this type of subjective journey thus: "Wholeness is associated with homecoming when the quest cycle is complete […] the experiences in the outer world can be "transferred" to the self that is being scrutinized, thus converting the journey into a mode of introspection." (Blanton 3) and "[…] travel writing begins at this point to emphasize the theme of self-discovery." (Blanton 21) As Carrilho himself states: "Em todos os regressos encontramos à nossa espera a identidade que costumamos vestir em casa, amarfanhada no sítio onde a deixáramos à pressa, pronta a ser sacudida e usada outra vez. Resta saber se a nudez valeu a pena." (Carrilho 117) [At every return, we find the identity we usually wear at home

waiting for us, scruffy where we left it in a hurry, ready to be shaken and worn once again. Whether the nakedness was worth it, remains to be seen.] Carrilho himself undergoes an inner transformation from the time he first departs to the final return home at the end of the book. In the beginning, he is, by his own admission, a nomad, a traveler as opposed to a tourist; someone who is focused on his travels and on his work. He purposely takes off on his adventure in order to discover new things and reconnect with his familial and cultural background; however, towards the end of the book, he begins to write more nostalgically about his home and life in Lisbon, and turns inward towards his immediate environment and towards his feeling about his own city:

> "É ao virar da esquina da minha casa que quero descobrir um recanto onde nunca fui, parar à sombra da árvore que sempre contornei. Perguntar pelas histórias que devia saber. Quero apanhar um autocarro de turista no Terreiro do Paço e sobrevoar a Baixa de helicóptero. Quero tratar Lisboa bem, falar melhor com ela, olhá-la com olhos de ver. Pensando melhor sou eu o culpado do desgaste na nossa convivência. Porque uma relação longa exige trabalho e dedicação, entrega consciente. E dura uma vida. Gasto-me em lugares que nunca perderam tempo comigo, e viro as costas à cidade que me fez." (Carrilho 117)
>
> [It's upon turning the corner of my home that I want to discover a nook in which I 've never been, pause under the shade of that tree that I always walk around. Ask about the stories I should know about. I want to catch a tourist bus at Terreiro do Paço and fly over the Baixa by helicopter. I want to treat Lisbon well, speak more kindly with her, see her with seeing eyes. The more I think of it, the decline in our interaction is my fault. Because a lasting relationship requires work and dedication, a conscious surrender. And lasts a lifetime. I waste my time in places that never spent any time on me, and I turn my back on the city that made me.]

With regards to writing style specifically, Carrilho opts for "foreignization", regularly using the lexicon of the central (English) system within the peripheral (Portuguese) system. Although the concept is generally used in translation theory, which I will explore more fully within the final section in which I discuss my own translation choices, in this case I believe it also applies to Carrilho's book. Though it is written in his own Portuguese language, he chooses to not translate certain words. An early example of this occurs right at the beginning of the text with the words "black", "heavy metal" and "ferry". (Carrilho 11) In making this choice, Carrilho opts for taking the Portuguese reader abroad into a foreign experience, or rather, bringing the foreign to the Portuguese reader. In a way, he is choosing to mix the

cultures, to open his work up to a global influence, to invite the central language system into his own peripheral culture; it remains a consistent choice throughout the text.

He also makes liberal use of infinitive verbal tenses, as in, for example, "Acordar em Maputo" [Waking up in Maputo] (Carrilho 11), which sets the initial temporal tone for the book. However, in my translation of this work, except for this initial passage where I use the gerund to convey the initial frenzy of travel, I chose to use mostly the imperative instead, for we get the sense that this is all happening as a list of things to do as if, while writing, when he is at rest, he is at the same time remembering, as well as making notes about, what to do while in motion, a somewhat fractal perspective I will further explore in the section on the author as post postmodernist writer. Further supporting this aspect of post postmodernity, is the fact that he uses his illustrations and journal entries made 'on the spot', thereby adding layers of media and meaning to his written observations, i.e. the different layers of meaning within the context of the book are themselves revealed via the different media used to create the content. By using both writing and handmade illustration, which is then digitized using new media in the form of design programs (in this case, Adobe InDesign), Carrilho is creating a "fractalized" approach to the moment he is living, one in which meaning is not assimilated and perceived simply as linear and horizontal, as in narrative, but also as experiential and vertical, as in collage.

In stylistic terms, Carrilho's book also reflects a trend in twentieth-century Travel Writing, as Hulme and Youngs point out:

> In the twentieth century, evidence of a change in the construction of travel narratives can clearly be seen in stylistic terms. Though the I-narrator still occupies a dominant position, the increasing use of dialogue in travel writing has further closed the gap between travel account and fiction, making the travel text resemble the novel much more closely. The protagonist engages in conversations that introduce a range of other characters into the narrative, and the reader is expected to believe that such conversations which apparently transcend any language barrier are recorded rather than invented. (Hulme and Youngs 235)

We can see an example of this in *inércia* starting on page 58, during a long exchange Carrilho has with a taxi driver in Macau.

Finally, as far as his tone, it is often humorous, a characteristic I shall further explore in relation to a post-colonial perspective in the second chapter below.

1.3 Objectives and Methodology of the Work-Project

It is only by a greater awareness of difference that human beings can hope to break the cycle of violence […]

Susan Bassnett, *Translation*

My objectives in translating this work were twofold. Firstly, as stated above, it was a direct request by Carrilho himself, but secondly, once I began the process, the goal became to translate the work in such a way as to appeal to a US readership. I elaborate on this latter goal below. In the third and final chapter of this work, in which I also analyze my own translation process, we shall see that, in order to translate the text properly I had to make use of various theories to anchor my choices. My theoretical framework rested primarily on Venuti's Translation Theory of Foreignization vs. Domestication and, as explained above, on the travel book as a literary text. Before delving deeper into these however, I feel it is useful to sketch the other theoretical structures or frameworks which arose during or after the translation process. Specifically, Travel Writing in the Age of Globalization and New Media, Post-colonialism, and Post Postmodernism, which I will also briefly discuss in the following chapter. My aim here is to show how Translation Studies is an interdisciplinary practice. The fact that I was confronted with such a plethora of theoretical bases with which to analyze this text confirms this perspective.

As far as the structure of this work, I have divided it into three parts, to which I have attributed suggestive titles which strictly reference the theme contained within them, as follows:

1) Chapter 1, entitled "Introduction: The Journey Begins", contains introductory information on the author and the source text, as well as my own methodology for this work-project;

2) Chapter 2, entitled "Theoretical Context: Along the Way", explores and elaborates on the theoretical bases for the body of the work, specifically with regards to the author as Travel Writer in the Age of Globalization and New Media, the Post-Colonial Author and what I have termed the Post Postmodernist Author.

3) Chapter 3, entitled "From *inércia* to *inertia*: Bridge to the New World", traces the challenges, strategies and choices I made during the process of translating this work and also contains the final Target Text in translation.

The conclusions, bibliography and original text as Annex, which follow the main body of this text, will conclude the work-project. And finally, from a more practical perspective, the translation of the book is intended for publication in the US Travel Literature market. To this end, upon completion of this work, I intend to interview some potential US publishers to gauge interest in, and the potential market value of, the book.

2. Theoretical Context: Along the Way

A travel book is like a poem in giving universal significance to a local texture.

Paul Fussell, *Abroad*

As we've seen in the introduction, Carrilho's book is the result of his journeys to some of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, Asia and India. I have established that this text is primarily a travel book, specifically a literary travel book, and defined how and why that is so, referencing the text directly. However, this *inércia* is not merely a literary travel book, but also addresses, either directly or indirectly, several current and contemporary themes, notably Globalization and New Media, Post-colonialism and what I have chosen to term Post Postmodernism. In order to get a better sense of the themes fleshing out the text, I will begin by exploring the backbone and supporting structure of the book: the travel experience as envisioned and recorded by Carrilho during his journeys.

2.1 The Author as Travel Writer in the Age of Globalization and New Media

[…]travel writing is a genre especially reflective of, and responsive to, the modern condition. We live, after all, in an era of increasing globalisation, in which mobility, travel and cross-cultural contact are facts of life, and an everyday reality, for many people.

Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing*

Throughout his personal, practical, visual and literary journeys, Carrilho is a keen

observer of himself and others. He questions his motivations, his actions and his judgements, and observes the 'other' through a lens of curiosity, compassion and humor. He also records his progress on his journeys, probing how his views of himself and the world change as he travels and records. Add to this his unique way of engaging with the outer world, via his beautiful illustrations, and we can confidently place this book within the definition of subjective Travel Writing. However, Carrilho also embodies a new type of traveler and writer particular to the age we live in, specifically, a globalized age and one in which New Media plays a role in the negotiated relationships we encounter daily, and especially when traveling. Within this world, increasingly, other meets other in a virtual environment or, if in the 'real' world, the relationship is itself 'mediated' via New Media. As, for example, in this passage: "Levantei os olhos do telefone e apanhei o jovem chinês ainda a olhar para mim, como se eu fosse o foco de maior interesse naquele instante. Todos os outros na mesa estavam no seu mundo particular, surfando como eu um mundo infinito de realidades na ponta dos dedos. Olhámo-nos nos olhos e percebi que nenhum de nós estava ali." (Carrilho 75) [I looked up from my phone and caught the young Chinese guy still looking at me, as if I were the most interesting subject at that moment. All the others at the table were in their own private worlds, surfing like me, an infinity of realities at their fingertips. We looked each other in the eye and I realized that neither of us was present.]

With regards to Travel Writing today, this passage is particularly significant because Carrilho recognizes here how technology, which ostensibly brings the world closer together, at the same time separates us as individuals; functions as a filter between true human connection. In my conversations with Carrilho he brought up this realization as the impetus for his decision to do manual illustrations to document his journey, rather than posting some digital illustrations on Facebook, which had been his original idea. This incident illustrates not only the phenomenon of technology as a potential barrier to direct human communication, but also, ultimately, the resulting paradox of a globalized world: two individuals from two different cultures using the same technology in the same location, observing each other but not connecting in any way EXCEPT for the recognition that each is absorbed in their own virtual world. The commodity is the message, not only in this one particular case, but in the world at large.

On the other hand, as far as travel and Travel Writing specifically are concerned:

> Instead of signaling the demise of travel writing, globalisation and mass tourism have led to its 'democratisation'. Not only are different kinds of people now writing travelogues (including those who were previously colonised), but the readership is also becoming more global and democratic […] travelogues can be a positive influence when writers and readers use images of otherness to reflect on their privileged cultural assumptions. (Lisle 20)

As we can see from Carrilho's experiences, this is very much a case with his own travel process and the questions he poses to himself along the way. To begin with, in his book, Carrilho recalls a distinction made between the definition of a tourist and that of a traveler (as Paul Fussell does in his book *Abroad*), and he paraphrases from the film *The Sheltering Sky* by Bernardo Bertolucci. In it, the distinction is made by the main characters thus: "A tourist is someone who thinks about going home the moment they arrive" (Kit Moreseby, *The Sheltering Sky*), "Whereas a traveler might not come back at all." (Port Moreseby, *The Sheltering Sky*).

This distinction between the traveler and the tourist is felt throughout the book and can be viewed from the perspective of contemporary consumption. "Tourists have become part of the accelerated movement of people, goods and services that is seen to be a characteristic feature of globalisation. Mike Featherstone argues that this movement is accompanied by a flow of signs and images that are present in all areas of everyday life […] with reproduced imagery becoming omnipresent." (Cronin, 2000: 84) As a Post-colonial traveler in the age of Globalization and New Media, there are events and images that both amuse and displace Carrilho. It is familiar, yet unsettling. An example of this is when he is driving to the airport with his father in Maputo, and they pass a shantytown. Carrilho observes that all along the route the houses bordering the road are painted in primary colors and covered with logos advertising for detergents and telecommunications. He writes: "O resultado é africano, mas a matéria-prima gráfica é ocidental, doutro hemisfério económico." (Carrilho 20) [The result is African, but the graphic raw material is Western, from a different economic hemisphere.] This is a prime example of the ex-colony as a rewriting of globalist Anglo-European capitalist values, NOT of a "translation" of Europe and, while the above passage certainly illustrates the effects of globalization on the travel experience, placing the focus squarely on the tourist/consumer rather than the traveler seeking out new and individual experiences, it also reflects a particular effect of the colonial project, which is that the Western colonizing forces bring into and impose upon the ex-colonies their culture, language and products. From an academic point of view:

> Broadly speaking, the aim of postcolonial studies is to comprehend, and to contest, the pernicious consequences of the vast European empires of the nineteenth and twentieth

> centuries. The European imperial project, and the global capitalism it promoted, laid the foundations of our modern, globalised world. It brought about cross-cultural contact, and the relocation of individuals and peoples, on a massive scale […] modern travel writing can yield significant insights into the ideologies and practices that sustain the current world order." (Thompson 3)

In fact, according to Hulme and Youngs, the era of globalisation in which we live today can be traced back to 1880 until 1940 right before the end of the colonial project. This process was set in motion by territorial colonialism and continues today as neo-colonial economic imperialism (Cf. Hulme and Youngs 73).

2.2 The Post-Colonial Author

More postcolonial travellers are travelling and writing back to the so-called centre, or journeying from within it.

Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*

In the above section, we explored the themes of the travel writer in the age of Globalization and New Media from a more or less general perspective. However, in Carrilho's case, part of his journey is also a quest to find his family and his country/culture abroad in the ex-colonies. Before focusing in on the specifics of his personal journey, however, it is worthwhile to give a brief description of the Portuguese colonial project that led to the steps involved in his physical journey.

The Portuguese Empire was a global empire, which began in 1488 when Bartolomeu Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. This is also where Carrilho's actual and writing journeys begin, as his first words on paper are: "André Carrilho foi ali ao Cabo das Tormentas, ver se encontrava Boa Esperança." (Carrilho6) [André Carrilho took off, to the Cape of Torments, to see if he could find Good Hope.] The empire lasted for six centuries, until the grant of sovereignty to East Timor in 2002, and spread throughout a vast number of territories on several continents. Carrilho's journey lasted for the entire year of 2012, with some periodic return to Portugal, and took him across three continents. In a limited sense, Carrilho is retracing some of the colonial project's steps, and through his eyes we can witness some of the results of this project taking shape in our own time. According to Lisle, "[…] many critics have argued that it is 'virtually impossible to consider travel writing outside the frame of postcolonialism.' […] travelogues are currently addressing their colonial past in a context of rapid globalization." (Lisle 2)

In a review of *Postcolonial Travel Writing: Critical Explorations*, Nishi Pulugurtha describes Travel Writing within the Postcolonial era and poses an interesting question:

> Travel writing is an interdisciplinary genre that, in recent times, has become an important area of study. Closely linked to issues of imperialism, diaspora, multiculturalism, nationalism, identity, gender globalization, colonialism and postcolonialism, it brings into play ideas of transculturation, the idea of the centre and the margin, border crossings, hybridity, location and displacement. Travel entails a movement away from a familiar place and location to an unfamiliar one, a new place, one that is different from one's home […] How does postcolonial travel writing represent this idea of identity, self and otherness? Can travel be a means of finding out one's identity? (Pulugurtha, 1)

The book takes Carrilho from Portugal to South Africa, then to Mozambique (Africa), Macau (China), Goa (India) and back to Portugal, with a stop in Dubai along the way. He is, in a way, retracing his family's footsteps, ostensibly to visit relatives and reconnect with them, but given his need to observe, explore, and analyze his experiences, this process easily translates into a personal quest. Tim Youngs claims that "Probably the most common kind of travel at present is the 'footsteps genre' [...] in which the author-protagonists journey in the steps of earlier travellers (ones to whom they may or may not be related)." (Youngs 184) However, just as "[…] many contemporary travel writers go to great lengths to *avoid* the imperial and patriarchal attitudes of their predecessors, opting instead for self-reflexive narratives that either foreground connections between global cultures, or use humour and self-depreciation to send up the notion of 'adventure' " (Lisle 70), Carrilho does not avoid his family and nation's colonial past, but rather chooses to be self-reflexive as he traverses the ex-colonies, circumventing direct comment except in instances addressing the Portuguese language. We can observe in the source text some examples of changes in post-colonial cultures that are typically accompanied by cultural syncretism and linguistic creolization. According to Cronin, there is a tension between what he terms horizontal and vertical travel.

> Horizontal travel is the more conventional understanding of travel as a linear progression from place to place. Vertical travel is temporary dwelling in a location for a period of time where the traveller begins to travel down into the particulars of place either in space […] or in time […] Literary travel involves these constant shifts between the macroscopic scale of the horizontal and the microscopic scale of the vertical. The sensitivity to language detail is partly then a function of the interaction between the two modes of travel." (Cronin, 2000: 19)

Some examples of this can be seen in Carrilho's charming recollection of an instance in Maputo, Mozambique, during a dinner gathering of family and friends from the various ex-colonies. There is a humorous description of Portuguese language wordplay on page 35 of the text, which I elaborate upon in the final chapter, that reflects the various misunderstandings that can arise from local interpretations and usage of the colonizing tongue. Cronin also states that "A feature of the contact zone, the areas of encounter between the colonisers and the colonised, is the predicament of translation." (Cronin, 2000:18) and, although André is not the colonizer but partly the 'product' of the colonizer, we can say that his encounters with the colonized reflect this feature, which we will explore more fully in the following chapter.

2.3 The Post Postmodernist Author

Devo estar a ter uma reacção a tudo o que nos bombardeia diariamente nos media, na Internet, nas redes sociais e afins.

André Carrilho, *inércia*

[I must be having a reaction to everything that bombards us daily in the media, on the Internet, on social networks, and the like.]

Before delving into this concept, which I have chosen to label a Post Postmodernist (as opposed to other suggested terms for the contemporary age – see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-postmodernism for a concise list of terms currently in use) aspect of Carrilho's text, I think it is useful to trace some historical steps leading from Modernism to Postmodernism and beyond, utilizing some of Carrilho's text and/or process as a basis for identification. For the sake of brevity and relevance, I have here opted to refer only to definitions which relate to culture and/or travel, and not to focus on the broader, historical or socio-economic implications of these theories.

Firstly, with regards to 'Modernism', "Martin Heidegger claimed that 'the fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture'. The implication of visual practices in travel is long established. From romantic landscape painting to the picture postcard and TV holiday programmes, travelling is often primarily projected as an activity of *seeing*." (Cronin, 2000: 81) Using Carrilho's work as an illustration, in and of itself, exemplifying this

view, his practice of drawing his impressions as he travels places him within this particular tradition of Modernity. Following Cronin's claim that "[…] travelling by the reader can take two forms, the *ocular* and the *epistemic*" (Cronin, 2000:37), I want to here point out that Carrilho, as the writer, enables this ocular experience through his illustrations. The reader need not imagine the optics (the *ocular*) through the act of reading (the *epistemic*), but can actually 'see' them through Carrilho's eyes. It is not just a matter of a multi-layer narrative perspective, but of a multimedia narrative perspective (Carrilho uses not only multiple layers of meaning, but multiple media to convey that meaning), taking a step beyond Marshall Mcluhan's "the medium is the message". What gives Carrilho's book the 'post' in post postmodernism are the attempts to find meaning outside of the medium: Carrilho uses the postmodern tools of mixed media to the tell the story, i.e. through "audio/literary visual", but the medium is no longer the message in and of itself, the medium simply enhances the dissemination of the message.

Another relevant definition of Modernism, or Modernity, is as follows: "Modernity is characterised by the exponential growth in travel and movement of people around the globe." (Cronin, 2000: 1) Here we find a bridge between the position of the travel writer and what Travel Writing signifies in terms of the modern condition of globalization and, in particular, that of the modern travel writer. Another earlier definition:

> Modernity is a deeply contested term, but its original form – as Baudelaire´s *modernité*, dating from an 1863 essay – ties it closely to notions of movement and individuality which, in the aristocratic figure of the *fláneur*, or stroller, stand out against the democratisation of travel […] in the late nineteenth century […] literary writers were also beginning to travel and to write about their travels […] Travel writing was becoming travel *literature* and was therefore taken with a new seriousness […]. (Hulme and Youngs 7)

Carrilho seems to identify more with the latter (traveler), but is somewhat in between, both as traveler and as someone who straddles cultures as a type of cultural tourist. He makes an attempt to describe why in this passage:

> Luto com esses dois rótulos e tento encaixar-me num deles. Por mais que os estique, não dá. Ambos têm algo que eu não tenho: disponibilidade para o que encontram no caminho. A minha é limitada, continuo a trabalhar, muitas vezes não tenho tempo para olhar a paisagem. Trato os sítios por onde passo como se fossem a minha casa, sem obrigações de visitar o monumento mais próximo. Sem olhar para um calendário ou para um guia de viagem. Quando muito serei um nómada. Esse não faz turismo nem viaja. A sua casa está espraiada, estica-se por alguns sítios familiares. E volta a eles regularmente, ao sabor dos elementos. (Nota para cartoon: um nómada a fazer turismo. Deve haver uma piada aí algures.) **(**Carrilho 31)

> [I struggle with both those labels and I try to fit into one of them. No matter how much I stretch them, it doesn´t work. They both have something I don´t have: openness to whatever crosses their path. Mine is limited, I keep working, often I don´t have the time to look at the landscape. I treat the places I visit like my home, with no obligation to visit the nearest monument. Without looking at a calendar or a tourist guide. If anything, I´m a nomad. That´s neither a tourist nor a traveler. His home is expansive, it stretches across some familiar sites. And he returns to them regularly, goes where the wind blows. (Idea for a cartoon: a nomad as a tourist. There must be a joke in there somewhere.)]

He seems to be searching for some kind of non-religious rebirth, which at times feels spiritual nonetheless, and this journey/quest is an attempt to answer some questions for himself. Hulme puts it this way: "As the earth's wildernesses get paved over, travel writing increasingly emphasizes an inner journey, often merging imperceptibly into memoir." (Hulme and Youngs 94)

Moving along towards Postmodernism: "With its emphasis on fragmentation, unexpected juxtapositions and abrupt jumps from one image to another, meanwhile, much Modernist literature and art bears the imprint of the faster lifestyle and the disorienting kinesis that is seemingly characteristic of modernity. (Thompson 57) Carrilho "fractalizes" or layers his experience using both imagery and language. Carrilho uses his text to accompany his illustrations, as an integral part of them, for self-referentiality, and to add fragmentariness (Cf. Youngs 186-187) In other words, in Carrilho's case, it is the non-verbal signs in the form of illustrations that are interpreted into verbal signs. Just as Cronin states:

> […] the traveller may actively seek exile from language as a means of communicative rebirth. The conventional interpretive grid of language is abandoned for other ways of knowing, channeled through taste, touch, vision, smell and (non-verbal) sound. The primacy of the visual, often seen as a dominant feature of globalisation, is examined in its implications for intersemiotic travel experience and for the spread of one global language. (Cronin, 2000:3)

So, to recap, the book's tracking from Modernism to 'Post' Postmodernism is as follows: Modernism alienated the human from its own inner reality by providing images to focus on, and then Postmodernism further fractalized and fractured the human via multimedia and multilayered realities. So how do we go from here to our current era of Post Postmodernism? Tim Youngs comments:

> There is a line to be traced here from Thoreau and his fellow transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, to D.H. Lawrence, with their shared anxiety that modern industrialism has

> alienated us from our souls and from the life that really matters […] Such an attitude is linked with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century manifestations of primitivism and presages the reaction against modernity that we see in twentieth- and twenty-first century nostalgia for slower travel and a more direct experience of nature. (Youngs 64).

As we will see, *inércia* exemplifies this new type of nostalgia by rejecting the current trend of relying solely on technology to form a narrative impression.

There are today other real-world examples of this reaction, as exemplified by a Swiss company called Punkt., which aims to fill the gap between today's hyper-technology and old technology, focusing on simpler protoypes for electronics and recommending the reading of actual as opposed to e-books. Their site also features a "digital detox journal." Its founder states in the "about" page: "Today's world is consumed with technology and I think we are too distracted by it in day-to-day life. I founded Punkt. to offer a viable alternative for those feeling overwhelmed by the advanced technologies that have pervaded modern lifestyles. Punkt. is about using technology to help us adopt good habits for less distracted lives." (Petter Neby)

As stated previously, one of the main impetuses for Carrilho's decision to write this book was the author's fatigue with all things media and social network. This part of his process begins with him posting impressions on Facebook, first the illustrations, then the kernels to the written text. Both the drawing and the writing were reactions against Instagram and 'selfies'. According to Carrilho, drawing and writing force you to spend time in the moment, it is a reaction against the distancing from the moment via technology. Drawing forces you to be there with yourself, and his writing arose as a result of using New Media, instigated by Facebook. Both drawing and writing are extremely personal but can be shared with others; however, Carrilho attributes more value to the hand-drawn and written work than to the endless stream of photos or posts on social media – he is not bound by the creative limitations of social media. It is also a reaction against the current media tools being used, to everyone being an artist, to the loss of artists' rights, an argument in favor of design, drawing, writing, etc. not being able to be appropriated – a reaction against appropriation of the artist's work. In my understanding, this places *inércia* squarely in the realm of the 'Post' Postmodern, as it is a rejection of the postmodernist view and approach to art in general and documentation in particular. The reaction against such a fragmentation; the desire for unification of a sort, whether religious, spiritual or, in Carrilho's case, secular and atheistic. Further, with regards to travel itself,

> […] modernism and postmodernism have helped undermine the authority of a single narrative perspective […] Innovations in technologies of travel made people more aware of how their experiences were affected by the mode of transport. This in turn resulted in a narrative self-consciousness about how they travelled previously and now. Not infrequently, texts go beyond comment on the means of travel and reflect on the appropriateness of the literary vehicle itself. (Youngs 68-69)

One specific manifestation of this reaction comes in the form of several passages in the book which relate directly to jet travel. Planes "[…] and films frame the world and, in a profoundly ambiguous sense (departure/distance), travel becomes an act of separation." (Cronin, 2000: 83) When Carrilho flies, his being is shut in his own world looking out of or making use of technological 'windows'. One example, is looking out of the airplane window that separates him from the world, another is the desire to connect, as in the passage where he regrets using the seat separator to block out the nun sitting next to him (Carrilho 66 - 67).

Finally, another feature of the 'post' postmodern condition, is that "[…] a journey often becomes a dialogue between the inner and the outer, between our emotional necessity and the reality of the external world." (Youngs 112), i.e. the Self vs. the World. Bringing the self into alignment with the outer world is a reaction against the fragmentariness of Postmodernism. As we've established earlier, Carrilho's journeys represent a type of retracing of his family's footsteps and, as such, a personal quest wherein his emotional necessities are in alignment with his physical journeys. The journeys may be

> […] spiritual or material, pacific or martial, solitary or collective, outward into the world or inward into the self. Travellers strive for victory – over aspects of themselves or over others. They search for enlightenment; for knowledge of other people, societies, and culture, of flora, fauna and geology […] they pursue leisure, sex, self-improvement; they aim to find spiritual reward or psychological repair in enactments of their inner journey […] (Youngs 87).

As a whole, *inércia* touches upon all of these, and brings us all on the journey with it. It is not only Carrilho who travels, but the reader and, as we shall see, this translator, who embark on the journey with him.

3. From *inércia* to *inertia*: Bridge to the New World

3.1 Challenges, Strategies and Choices of the Translator

The implicit purpose of translation is to make the 'original' text travel.

Michael Cronin, *Across the Lines: Travel, Language, Translation*

The translation of Carrilho's book is from mainland (Continental or European) Portuguese into American English, these being the languages and cultures within which I grew up and with which I am, therefore, most familiar. Though both of the main forms of English — British and American — are relatively uniform, there are some differences, such as the spelling of "travelling" with two "l's" (British) versus "traveling" with one "l" (American), etc. Unless I am quoting a reference that utilizes the British form, the translation and this companion text are written with an American target readership in mind. Beyond the grammatical differences, however, in my case in particular, there is also the question of the difference between cultures. As Michael Cronin says:

> The translating agent, like the traveller straddles the borderline between cultures. A nomadic theory of translation proposes the translator-nomad as an emblematic figure of (post)modernity by demonstrating what translation can tell us about nomadism and what nomadism can tell us about translation and how both impinge on contemporary concerns with identity. (Cronin, 2000: 2)

Though I am not, in the strictest sense, a "nomad", I have always considered myself such, given the constant back and forth travel between Portugal and the US, as well as some more extended sojourns in Portugal, for example, when I spent 2 years from the ages of 10 to 12 years living in Portugal and attending Portuguese grammar school, as well as later on, for 8 months as an adult. In addition, my own impulse has always been that of a traveler (as opposed to tourist), and I have traveled independently and extensively for most of my adult life. Though I always have a pre-destined "home" to return to, in fact I have always considered myself a cultural nomad. It is no wonder then, that I was early on attracted to languages in general, and to the idea of translation specifically. In fact, as a young child of immigrants, one of my first memories of my new home in the US was of translating as well as I could for my parents, who did not speak English and who relied on me, and my limited childhood English, for support. As a child, I learned the language quickly and just as quickly became my parents' translator and interpreter as they struggled to adapt to our new cultural and linguistic environment. Thus,

I was very early on not only attracted to, but in a way forced to, delve into the world of the two languages. However, this state extends beyond language and into a translation between cultures as well. My culture of origin has its roots in a Portuguese rural, agricultural environment, and a direct connection to the land and to nature in general, whereas my introduction to my family's adopted culture was almost diametrically opposed to that. We moved in 1972 to Jamaica, Queens, a relatively diverse neighborhood at the time, but which nonetheless was primarily African-American and, in a way, already 'ghettoized'. I was, for example, the only white girl in my local grammar school for most of my time there. Also, it was a definite concrete jungle, with everything that goes along with that specific context. From bunny rabbits and meals by the fire, to ghetto blasters and playing in the fire hydrants. It would have been a definite cultural shock for anyone, but for a child of 4, it was an amazing adventure and I managed to absorb and thrive within all that the new world had to offer. I did; however, suffer some initial humiliations due to my lack of language skills. In kindergarten, one of my memories is of being scolded for stealing paint from another child's easel, as I didn't know how to ask for it. This incident instilled in me a determination to always attempt to learn, or at least communicate, as best I could, in whatever language I was presented with during my travels. As a result of this early exposure and attraction to language and culture, I chose for my undergraduate studies the field of languages and literatures, specializing in French and German Literature in the original languages. In addition to these I have also studied Russian, Italian, Spanish and Czech at various points in my life. Though I am not fluent in all of them, they allow me to communicate well in almost every part of the world which I might visit on my travels. However, American English and the American experience are the domain I am most familiar with, and fluent in.

One specific characteristic of the American experience, is that the American audience has always been fascinated with the road trip, and hence the road trip literary travel book genre. For example, the works of Mark Twain and Jack Kerouac, works which have, for their part, traveled the world through translation.

> John Steinbeck declares in *Travels With Charley* that Americans descended from those who moved: those who left Europe, those who were forced to leave Africa, and those who came in search of a better life. It makes sense that we would be travelers. Every American hungers to move," he writes. "But most of us can't just pack up and leave […] (Smithsonian magazine online article)

Though today's audience is very different from that of Steinbeck's time, given the easy access to international information and virtual travel, the American today still hungers for that freedom of movement and still travels widely. A quick search on Wikipedia yielded a list of 50 titles under "American Travel Books". A subsequent quick scan of the list revealed that I was familiar with exactly 0 of those titles. Which led to the realization that Travel Writing is not a genre generally taught in the American educational system. Americans have tendency to look inward, and what travel books we are most familiar with – for example Jack Kerouac's *On The Road* – are generally within the road trip genre, especially the road trip across the vast American continent, and specifically the road trip across the United States in search of the American experience. Today, it is difficult to gauge what importance Travel Writing in generally might have for the American public; however, Carrilho's book, while not taking place in the US, and while not a 'road' trip book per se, could be called an 'air' trip book, following some of the genre's predecessors, and is well placed in time to have some success in attracting the curiosity of the American public as it is about Portugal and its colonies, by a Portuguese author, at a time when Portugal is extremely popular as a destination for Americans. It always has been to a small sector of the population – retirees, etc., – but today it is impossible to mention where I am from originally, when I am in the US, without being grilled for information. In the past, people used to ask me if Portugal was a part of Spain, but today everyone not only knows where it is, but is counting the days until they are able to visit. And the market itself is a rapidly expanding one, as interest in Portugal and Lisbon, and in Portuguese culture generally, is at an all-time high in the US. Not a day goes by when I don't hear from an American friend or stranger expressing interest in visiting Portugal, and Lisbon in particular.

In addition to that, in taking on the responsibility of translator of Carrilho's book, I am able to draw upon not only my knowledge of American English, but also of my experiences as traveler/nomad and literary scholar, and put myself in his shoes, so to speak, when confronting this particular translation experience. And so, it is not by chance, given my life experience, that I currently find myself interested in Translation Studies.

At this moment, there is an ever-increasing interest in Translation Studies with regards to Travel Writing, as it is recognized as a particularly fertile and productive genre for applying the analytical instruments of this interdiscipline. Susan Bassnett highlights the necessity of paying more attention to travel narratives, given that there are many similarities between the

traveler and the translator: “The travel writer and the translator are major elements in shaping the perspective one culture has of another, and it is interesting that so little research should have been undertaken to date on the relationship between travel and translation." (Bassnett 2007: 23) For a brief survey on this topic, we can turn to Loredana Polezzi’s entry, "Mobility", from the second edition of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*:

> […] travellers and translators have, for a long time, played the role of intermediaries between cultures […] This type of work is also typical of a tendency for studies in the interconnected history of travel, travel writing and translation to combine, at a methodological level, the analysis of micro-and macro-textual features [...] a complex web of travelling images and multiple refractions which often involve several layers of writing, Rewriting and Other, an examination of the foreign travel accounts translated by a culture at any particular point in time, of the Strategies adopted by the translators, and of the marketing choices selected by publishers to promote these texts is potentially revealing of wider cultural trends. (Polezzi 173-174)

The first challenge I faced was the format of the book. I received the file in PDF form and it included numerous images; the drawings central to the text. I first had to convert from PDF into Word, then import into Wordfast (online TM tool), then export the word document with a PDF and convert back into a PDF format, all the while maintaining the proper structure. With Carrilho’s help, using Adobe InDesign, I was able to format the translation to look identical to the original. Also, the title and credits pages are images, so, again with Carrilho’s help, I added some new images with the English versions to the final translated text.

The second major challenge I faced was my thus far limited knowledge of Portuguese vocabulary, which is extensive and required frequent dictionary usage and research in order to be faithful to some of the nuances and subtleties of the language. I opted to use endnotes rather than footnotes in the final version to explain certain language concepts, vocabulary, names of places, etc., rather than translating them, for example to explain things such as *fado*, etc…This choice was made to preserve the aesthetic look of the original.

As for the translation and the translation process themselves, on a broader level I chose to follow Lawrence Venuti’s concept of foreignization versus domestication. As a product of both cultures, and despite, as previously mentioned, having a deficit in the Portuguese language as compared to American, I was fortunate to be able to travel back and forth throughout my life, from the time I was 4 years old, and so to easily straddle the two. With regards to this work, “translation as an activity is always doubly contextualized since the text has a position

in two cultures […] Contextual knowledge of both source and target systems was therefore deemed to be as important as linguistic competence, possibly even more so." (Bassnett, 2014: 30-31) This is directly applicable to me as a Portuguese-American living and working in both contexts. I therefore had to make a choice in how I approached the text and the target reader. Did I want to highlight the country and culture of my birth, or did I want to honor my adopted country and culture by tailoring the translation in such a way as to erase the cultural specifics of the original and make it a more 'friendly' read for an American? In contemplating this choice, I had to appeal to my broader view of the world and so, my choice was to opt for "foreignization" which, according to Lawrence Venuti, enables the translation process to reveal and give voice to the source text's culture, preserving its meaning and foreignness in the target-language text. In this way, the "foreignness" of the source culture is preserved and resists the target culture's domination. In this age of globalization, I believe it is important to preserve and give voice to as many "peripheral" languages and cultures as possible, and to resist the overall dominant tendency to standardize everything from language to gastronomy to the very experience of the tourist, seeking all the familiar "comforts" of home while abroad.

As Venuti describes it, foreignization is a choice by which a translator takes the target reader back to the source culture, rather than "domesticating" the text for a foreign readership. It is a form of resistance to the dominance of the central, Anglo-American target cultures in favor of giving a voice to the peripheral cultures being translated.

This choice was made in opposition to the concept of "domestication" in translation:

> Issues of 'domestication' and 'foreignization' were […] implicit in Schleiermacher´s question of whether the author should be brought closer to the reader or vice-versa. This 'domesticating' method has been described by Lawrence Venuti as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language cultural values, bringing the author back home", while the foreignization approach constituted an "ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad." Domestication also involved an actualizing approach which adapted the translated text to the values and norms of the target culture, while 'foreignization' sustained the socio-historical differences that characterized the source text, thus enabling readers to gain insight into the source culture and ideology. As Venuti cogently argues, foreignization can act not only as a form of resistance against ethnocentrism, racism, and imperialism, but also as a form of resistance to textual exclusion by domestic literary canons. (Martin and Pickford 10-11)

According to Susan Bassnett, "Venuti's position is that this kind of translation not only erases signs of the foreign in a text, but also affirms a belief in the superiority of English." (Bassnett, 2014: 14) and goes on to advise that "what the translator should do is remind the

reader that the world of the original was a different world" (Bassnett, 2014: 17). This has been my aim throughout the translation process and my choices are a reflection of that aim, as for example, when on page 22 of Carrilho's book he refers to 'A1', I specify in my translation that it is the A1 highway rather than substituting it for an American version or making it a generic, nameless road or highway. The intention here is to bring the reader back to the original country and its specifics, reminding them of the fact that they are reading a travelogue by a foreign writer from a foreign country.

With regards to cultural references, verb tenses, etc., Cronin states: "Lexical differences, figurative exuberance, word play, hyperbole, euphemism and accent are so many strategies of estrangement that make for a space of mediation and interpretation […] the encounter with different varieties of the traveller's own language creates an even sharper sense of specific linguistic identity." (Cronin 2000: 16) An example of word-play can be found in the following passage from Carrilho's book:

> "É cocó." O brasileiro está baralhado. "Como, cocó? É galinha?" A mesa explode, talheres e louças tilintam de riso. Sirvo-me de mais BSE e vou em seu auxílio. "Não, é cocó! Há o chichi e há o cocó. Como é no Brasil?" Os seus olhos abrem-se num misto de excitação e reconhecimento. Mas que espanto. "O que nós temos é cocô!!! Cocó é o que a galinha fala!" Digo-lhe que outro dia comi um belo frango de coco. Ele não cabe em si de contente. "Vivi anos em Portugal e só agora aprendi uma nova palavra. Cocó!" A noite está ganha. Torna-se evidente na sua alegria: sem cocó a vida seria uma merda. (Carrilho 35)

> ["It's cocó." The Brazilian is confused. "What do you mean by cocó? Is it a chicken?" The table erupts, silverware and dishes tinkle with laughter. I pour myself some more BSE wine and come to the rescue. "No, it´s cocó! There is pee pee and there is cocó. What is it in Brazil?" His eyes open wide with a mixture of excitement and recognition. What a surprise. "What we have is cocô!!!!! Cocó is what chickens say!" I tell him that the other day I had a delicious coco(nut) chicken. He can't contain his happiness. "I lived in Portugal for years and just now learned a new word. Cocó!" The night is a success. It´s obvious from his joy: without cocó life would be shit.]

Here I opted not to translate the words in play: "cocó" and "cocô", as the word-play would be lost in translation. Instead I defined them in the endnotes that conclude my translation (see chapter 3, section 3.1), through which I also make myself visible and heard as a translator Within the translation itself, the endnotes are signaled by roman numerals in superscript.

Occasionally, I chose to use the gerund (ex: "Waking up in Maputo…") after a conversation with the author. It implies the frenzy of continuous movement, not a finished action; he is always in motion, at the same time, he is observing himself acting, and narrating

his own actions. For the most part, however, I use the present tense: "The use of the present tense and the ever-extended syntax combine to create a sense of immediacy, activity, and bewildering excess." (Hulme and Youngs 202) Carrilho mostly uses the present tense in his original text, and I opted to remain faithful to him in this regard. As the quote above suggests, this creates a sense of frenzy, such as one might experience during an extended travel itinerary to various locations around the globe.

I also chose to italicize the foreign (Portuguese) words in reverse. Just as Carrilho opts for foreignization and italicizes English words rather than translating them, I also chose to italicize Portuguese words rather than translating and, as previously stated, have added endnotes where needed and appropriate. In a sense, I reversed Carrilho's approach of bringing the foreign into the Portuguese culture, and opted to bring the Portuguese into the so-called foreign.

3.2 The Target Text: *inertia*

INERTIA
André Carrilho

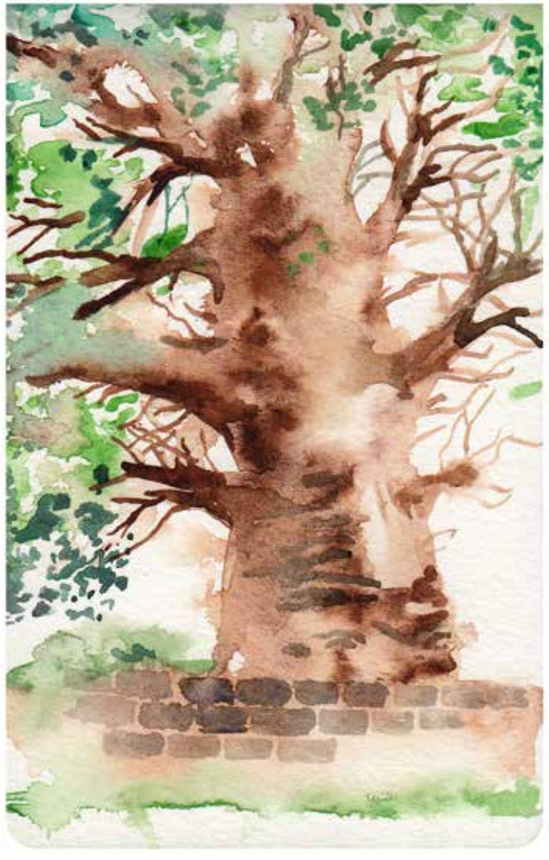
INÉRTIA

André Carrilho

Keep a diary, someday it may keep you

Mae West

André Carrilho took off, to the Cape of Torments, to see if he could find Good Hope.



Embondeiro, Pemba, Mozambique 20 Jan 2012

Wimbe Beach, Pemba, Mozambique 21 Jan 2012

Sarah's Porch, Pemba, Mozambique 23 Jan 2012

Waking up in maputo after a night at Gil Vicente[i], listening to a *black*[ii] guitarist playing *heavy metal*, a totally drunk genius kid singing *soul*, a bassist MC, stoned out of his mind, and a true drummer, a virtuoso. Mental note, this will be a regular resting spot. Packing bag and taking off to Johannesburg, waiting, then Hong Kong, transferring to *ferry*, and Macau, 20 something hours, a good film and two bad ones after departure. Showing up at a ceremonial dinner for the Macau Literary Festival, chatting with distinguished Portuguese writers (names withheld to protect their privacy) followed by a Fado[iii] concert. Missing the motherland. Detour of Portuguese writers to the Bellini in the Venetian, which is now the Playboy Club, drinking Carlsberg served by girls with bunny ears and bunny tails to the sound of Prince and "I Will Survive", played by a group of imported American singers and musicians, multifaceted in their inconsequential talents.

Taxi home, thinking that something fundamental has changed in one's perception of the world.

Lying on the sand, rocked by the gentle night sea air, the fireflies are stars with hidden intentions.

Ten meters deep, the coral floor ends, dropping suddenly. Ahead, an enormous wall of attentive eyes and silvery reflections waiting, a challenge. We advance and the wall moves around us, granular, transforming itself into a perfect cupola, surrounding us, keeping a safe distance. Using the flow of air in our lungs, we control the flotation in order to stay still. There we remain, a silent dialogue of instincts, inside a giant bubble of living beings. Biology, science, research, radical sport... It's all good. But architects, poets and philosophers also belong here.

One improvises. On the way to the airport, the road is flanked by shanty towns. The facades, painted in primary, garish colors, going by quickly, and out of the corner of the eye we can make out *slogans* and familiar nouns. It's clear: detergent brands and telecommunications operators pay the residents who are lucky enough to inhabit a wall facing the road, and paint it with logos and ads. The result is African, but the graphic raw material is Western, from another economic hemisphere.

"You see? It was here." My father takes his hand off the wheel and points to a darker patch of asphalt in the middle of the road, before driving over it without slowing down. I remember what he told me yesterday during lunch.

Last year, some raised the price of bread and others, higher in number, took to the streets. They barricaded the streets, lit tires on fire. "But do tires burn?" "Of course, they are made of fuel; you set them on fire and they just burn." (One of the problems with growing up in a technology consuming society, is the perpetual ignorance of what exactly things are made of. Onward.) The powers that could, retaliated with what they had, and on hand was tear gas, a dispersal weapon. Its damage can be minimized by washing the face with water. For a few days, however, nobody moved and a new business sprung up. You started seeing people with tubs of water on the side of the road. For five bucks you could wash your face, wipe away the gas tears and go back to the insurrection.

Once at the airport, we decide to wrap the bag in protective cellophane, to prevent theft, before checking it. At the end, the *check-in* guy puts a bright red ribbon on it, for no apparent reason. Of course, it is stamped with the logo of the largest telecommunications operator in the country.

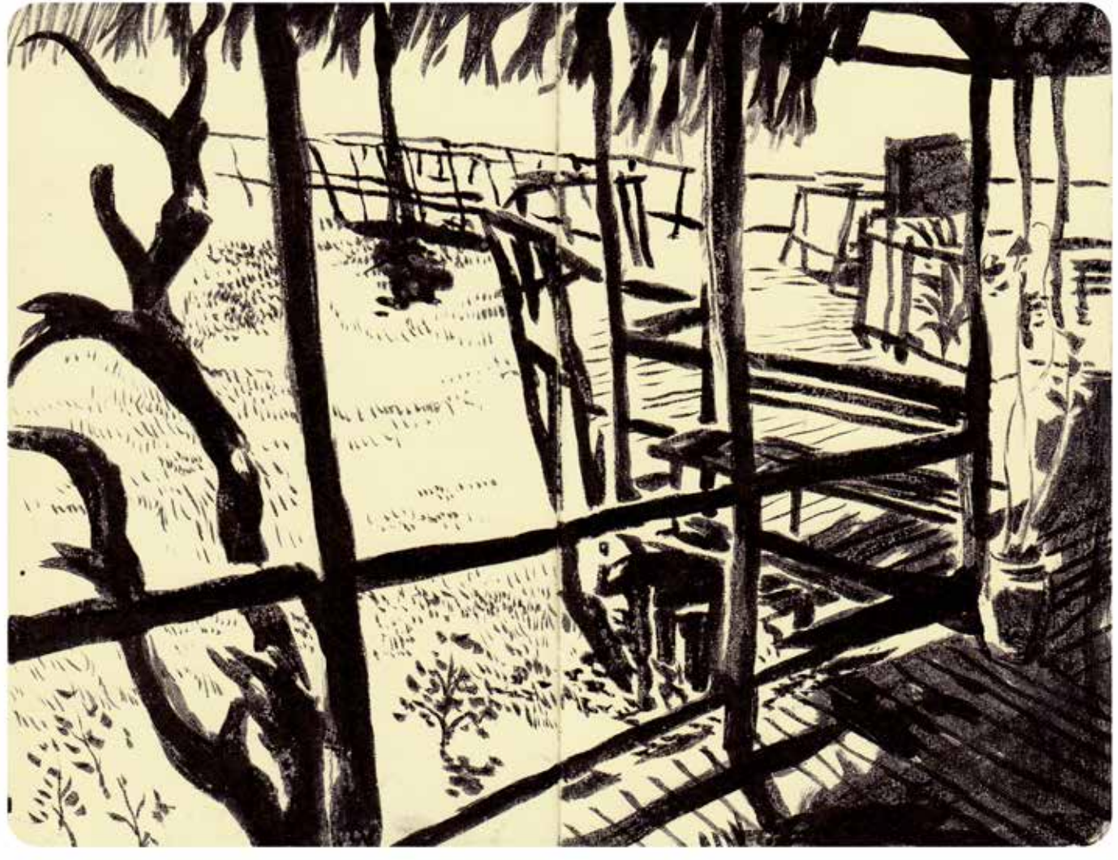
In Mozambique, even the peace of mind is sponsored.

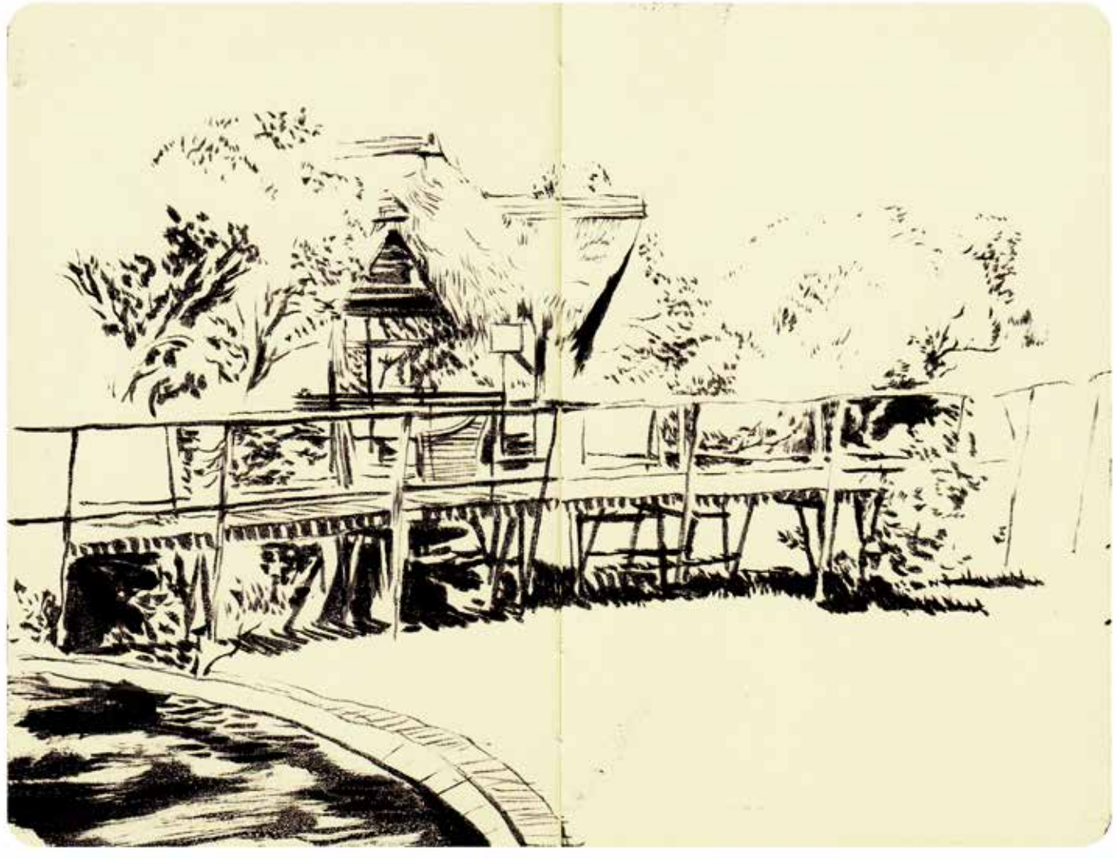
This time it was different. A beach as far as the eye can see, scalded by the sun and the sea, wavy, robust. Waiting for us, in the distance, at the water's edge, is an inflatable speedboat with two motors. We are two female instructors, a group of two men and a woman, and me.

The more experienced of the instructors, flanked by her colleague, two young, blond women with South African accents, both explain some of the procedures in English, and the path we will be following. Picking up a crumpled book containing pictures of marine life, one of them points out the portraits of the beings we might encounter. "It is better not to touch these four here under any circumstances, they are poisonous." This interests me. "And what happens if we get stung?" "Well, this one here" – she points to the ugliest one, it doesn't even look like a fish, more like a boulder – "if it stings you, you will die in seven seconds." The other one also knows a few things. She shows us a fish that doesn't beat around the bush, it has red and white stingers. "With this one you might survive, but it's not likely. You will die in a day or two." We laugh. I ask myself which would be the stupidest way to die, stung by a sub-aquatic animal in the Indian Ocean or in a car, on the A1, the main highway heading from Lisbon to Porto. And which is the most statistically probable. The A1 highway, of course. Definitely the stupidest of the two.

The woman from the group of three asks the obvious question: "Can't we go look at some sharks instead?"

Underwater we follow the leader, who carries the floating signal cable. The other one follows us vigilantly. I try to take some photos, but it's not easy. I am not yet on automatic, lots to think about and must stay alert. Equalize the ears, regulate the air in the lungs to maintain the flotation level, don't climb too much, don't touch anything, breathe regularly, ignore a slight cramp, don't let the group out of sight, deal with the water entering the goggles, look at that fish, hold on, this goes up now, let's see how much air remains... I focus on a small group of fish that looks undecided, it goes sideways, from one direction to the other. The instructor had warned us, in this spot the water imprints the pendular motion of the waves onto everything. I for one was suspicious, trying to fix my position in relation to the ground, wasting energy and precious oxygen. The fish, wiser than me, let themselves go, that way, this way, that way, this way. They're right, I relax and join the waltz. Just as when painting a watercolor, it is best to let the water decide. I may never become a fish, but I will learn to be like ink.





It had to be, it's always like that, infuriating. I'm in a docu- mentation frenzy, photographs, drawings, videos, texts. For this madness I found a method, a logic, which would be boring to explain. Suffice it to say, that the practical result is to film all the take-offs and landings of the planes I take. I put the phone up to the window and record. I cast the net to see if I catch anything interesting. And the other day I lost a very large fish, about this big!

It was more like a school of fish. An enormous one, of people. We landed in Inhambane, after a layover in Vilanculos, with no particular incident to report. On the runway, heading towards the apron, I decide to stop filming. A landscape like countless others, asphalt on the runway, the usual grass, the plane wing I'd been filming the entire trip to take my mind off the condition it was in, you see. I put away the phone and we begin to turn a corner, tight, abrupt. And as it turns with the plane, all of a sudden the window reveals our destination terminal. In front of the building stands what seems to be the entire city. A compact wall of people bordering the asphalt, some singing, others dancing, here a group dressed in white, there another in red, all looking at us, bands, schools, peoples. A reception worthy of a high rank.

The plane is small, a prop plane, doesn't have classes. Who is this pageant for? The man in the first seat, two seats in front of me, gets up. He is wearing a suit and tie, anachronistic, I should have guessed. The plane door opens, letting in heat, music and shouts. The man exits and none of the other passengers move. I don't want to be next, I am petrified of the spotlight. But I guess I have no choice. Most people will not exit the plane, which is returning to Maputo. This stopover is only for a few minutes.

I walk down the steps of the plane with two other women and the crowd looks on, quieter now. There is a line which the people welcoming us will not cross, the edge of the runway asphalt. As long as I am stepping on it, I am under their gaze, the focus of their attention. The whites of their eyes follow me, dissecting.

I don't know what the dignitary they were waiting for thought, but I understood. In Inhambane, as in many other places, in order to arrive and become a part of the landscape you have to get off the asphalt as soon as possible, and step onto the dirt.

There Was That Film By Bertolucci, *The Sheltering Sky*, based on the book by Paul Bowles. John Malkovich, Debra Winger. There's a moment in which one of them speaks of the difference between a tourist and a traveler. "A tourist knows when to return home, a traveler doesn't". Or something like that. I struggle with both those labels and I try to fit into one of them. No matter how much I stretch them, it doesn't work. They both have something I don't have: openness to whatever crosses their path. Mine is limited, I keep working, often I don't have the time to look at the landscape. I treat the places I visit like my home, with no obligation to visit the nearest monument. Without looking at a calendar or a travel guide.

If anything, I'm a nomad. That's neither a tourist nor a traveler. His home is expansive, it stretches across some familiar sites. And he returns to them regularly, goes where the wind blows. (Idea for a *cartoon*: a nomad as a tourist. There must be a joke in there somewhere.)

In the hustle and bustle of transition, many times I don't notice things I should. Drawing helps me to stop and observe, gives me time with my surroundings. Contains a tinge of meditation. I used to believe that you either lived or you documented what you lived, that the act of stopping to draw or take a photograph would sever the connection to any experience. It's different now. While drawing, my gaze is a bit deeper. I stop everything, sit with whatever surrounds me and take it in.

I don't think of anything else. I assure myself that what is committed to paper is a memory, more enduring than others.

I HAVE TO PAY THE BILL, AND I AM ALONE WITH THE RECEPTIONIST, both of us temporarily held hostage to my card, the network, technology. I need a pen to sign the slip. He breaks the silence. "Are you Portuguese?" I am always surprised by the question, I thought it was obvious. "Yes I am." "May I ask you a question?" There's a certain diffidence in his approach, as if he were going to reveal something intimate. "Do you say can I borrow a *caneta emprestada*?" or can I borrow a *caneta emprestado*?"[iv] Yeah, I always forget that this thing, the "*comunidade de países de língua portuguesa*" (CPLP - Community of Countries of the Portuguese Language)[v] is a construct that requires maintenance. In this region of Mozambique, Portuguese is the second language. The first is the indigenous language, which varies within the territories of each people, indifferent to the borders made up by whites. Those that work in hotels have to learn the language of the visitors, whether or not they are countrymen.

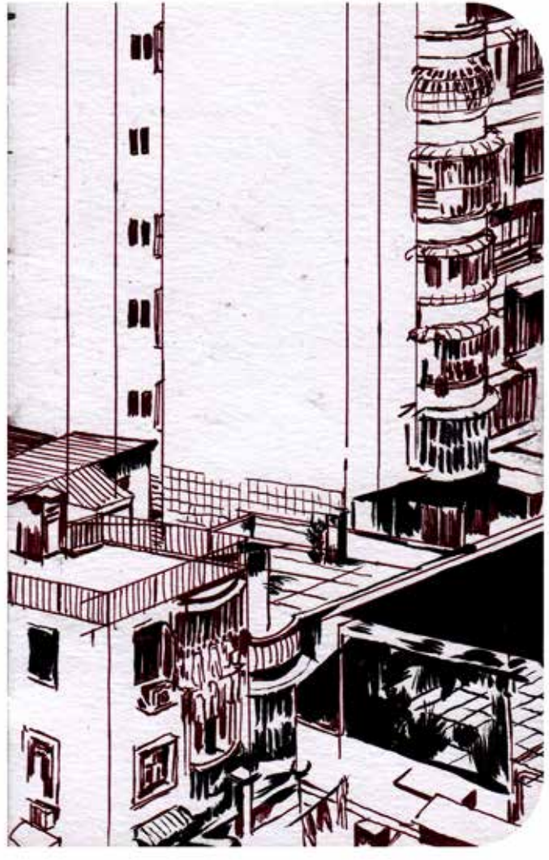
On the way to the airport, the driver starts chatting. It must be one of those days. He asks me if I liked the Flamingo and if it was my first time. I say very much and yes, and I add that it won't be the last. "You know, right now the tide is not very high, that's when it is even more beautiful." I'm confused. "But wasn't it high this morning?" "Yes, but last week it was higher, and this week it got lower. Which means that next week it will rise again, until it is higher. It keeps changing." I ask myself if it has to do with the lunar cycle, I'd never thought of that.

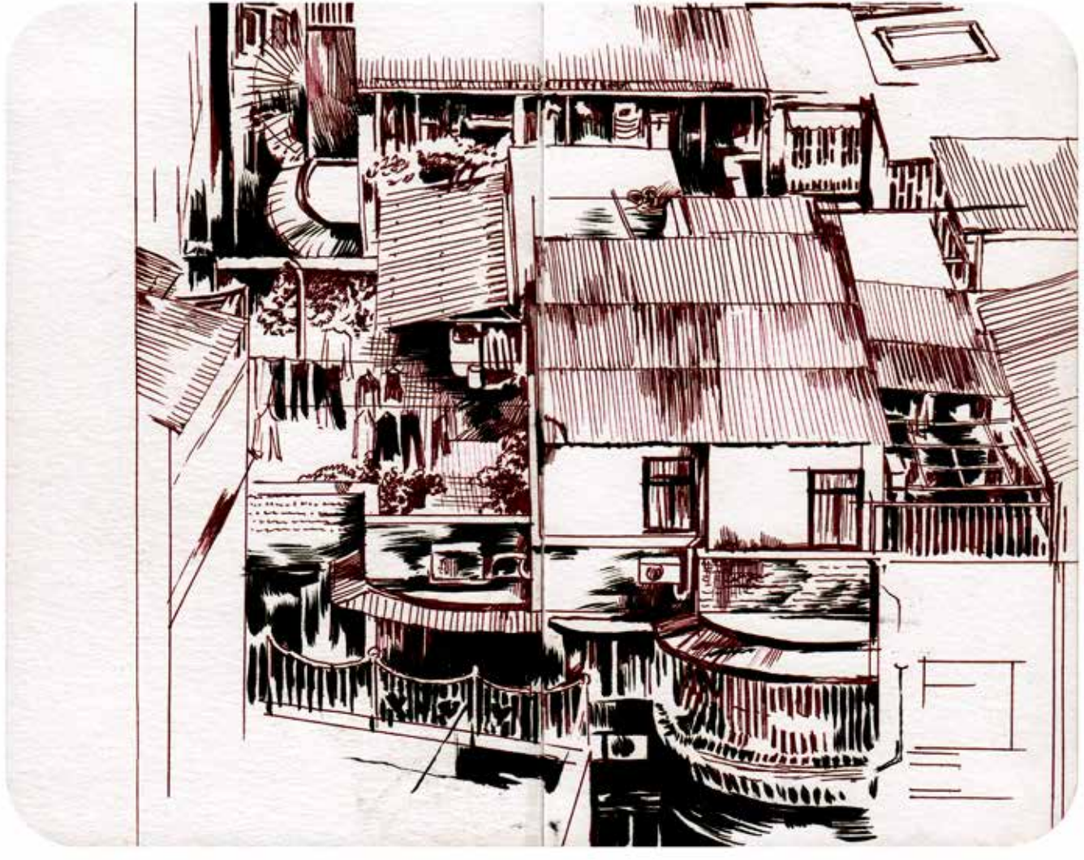
He also suspects that it has something to do with the Moon, after all we are speaking about tides. "When it's like that, the water stays up here, very close to the ground, forty centimeters, and everything is even more beautiful." It must be true, I can imagine the footbridges and porches, opening a path at sea level, creating a slight optical illusion. Now I really must come back. Call me petulant, but I can already imagine myself walking on water.

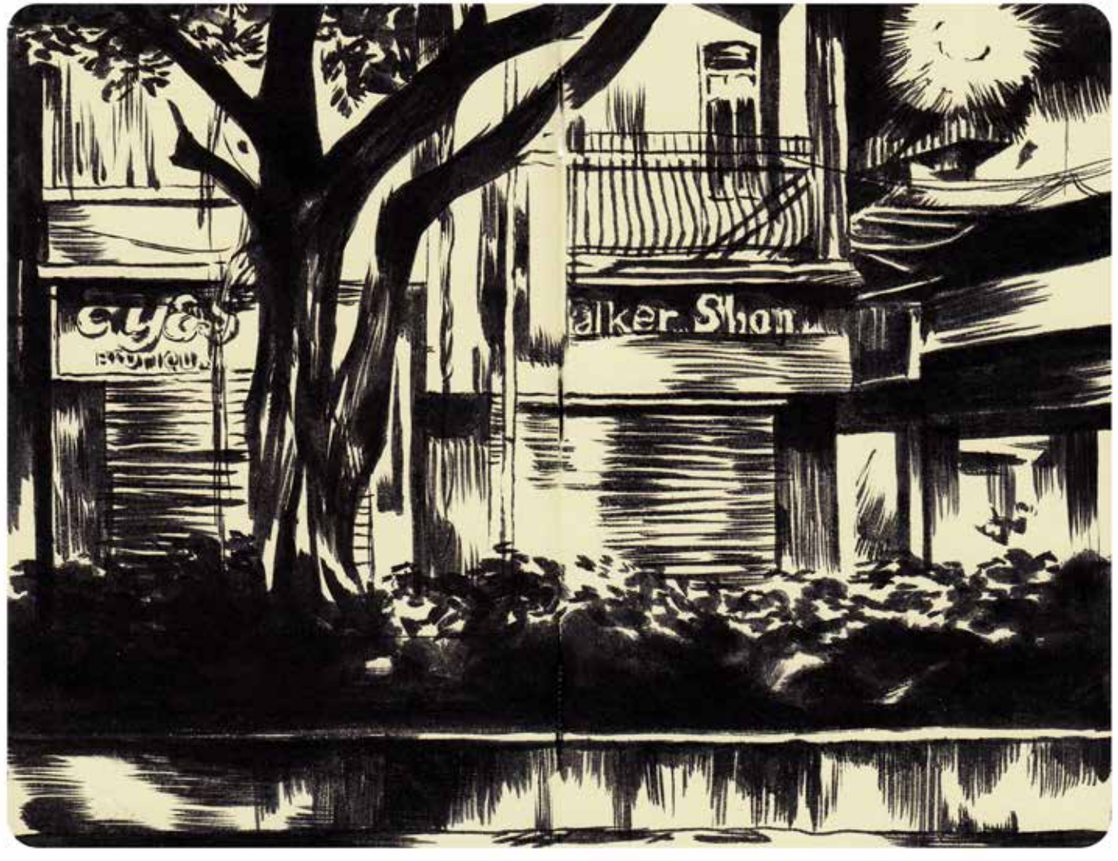
Back in Maputo, I find out that the gravitational pull of the Moon combines periodically with that of the Sun to create higher tides. But my online research is interrupted. It seems some of my father's university colleagues want to meet me. A dinner party, just like that, has to happen. At the table, covered with delicacies and Professors of Architecture, the Portuguese language is represented by its main speakers. A professor from Brazil, one from Angola, two from Mozambique, three from Portugal. The host, white but a native, begins to explain what *machimbombos* are. "They are *chapas*, that's what we used to call them." *Chapas* are vans that function as buses, but smaller, normally packed with people. My father thinks of another one. "I never understood why, at some point, they were called *semicolectivos*. What is that, a *semicolectivo*? It's either a collective or it isn't!" His indignation is always tempered by the musicality the language has acquired in this country. The sense of surprise adds a few notes that we in Portugal don't use. But the owner of the house has not finished the lesson. "Now, *machimbombos* comes from *machimba*..." My father puts his hands on his head. They love each other, are very good friends. Like a well-rehearsed *vaudeville* duo, each one has his role to play. My father is the serious one, but that doesn't mean he doesn't know where the conversation has to go. It has to look as if he's reluctant to go there, that's part of the *show*.

The meaning of *machimba* is implied, mainly because it is not immediately verbalized since we are at the table. But the Brazilian man does not understand, and the Angolan woman kind of throws him the answer, somewhat under the table. "It's *cocó*." The Brazilian is confused. "What do you mean by *cocó*? Is it a chicken?" The table erupts, silverware and dishes tinkle with laughter. I pour myself some more BSE[vi] wine and come to the rescue. "No, it´s *cocó*! There is pee pee and there is *cocó*. What is it in Brazil?" His eyes open wide with a mixture of excitement and recognition. What a surprise. "What we have is *cocô*!!!!! *Cocó* is what chickens say!" I tell him that the other day I had a delicious coco(nut) chicken. He can´t contain his happiness. "I lived in Portugal for years and just now learned a new word. *Cocó*!" The night is a success. It´s obvious from his joy: without *cocó* life would be shit.

Backyard, Maputo, Mozambique 02 Apr 2012



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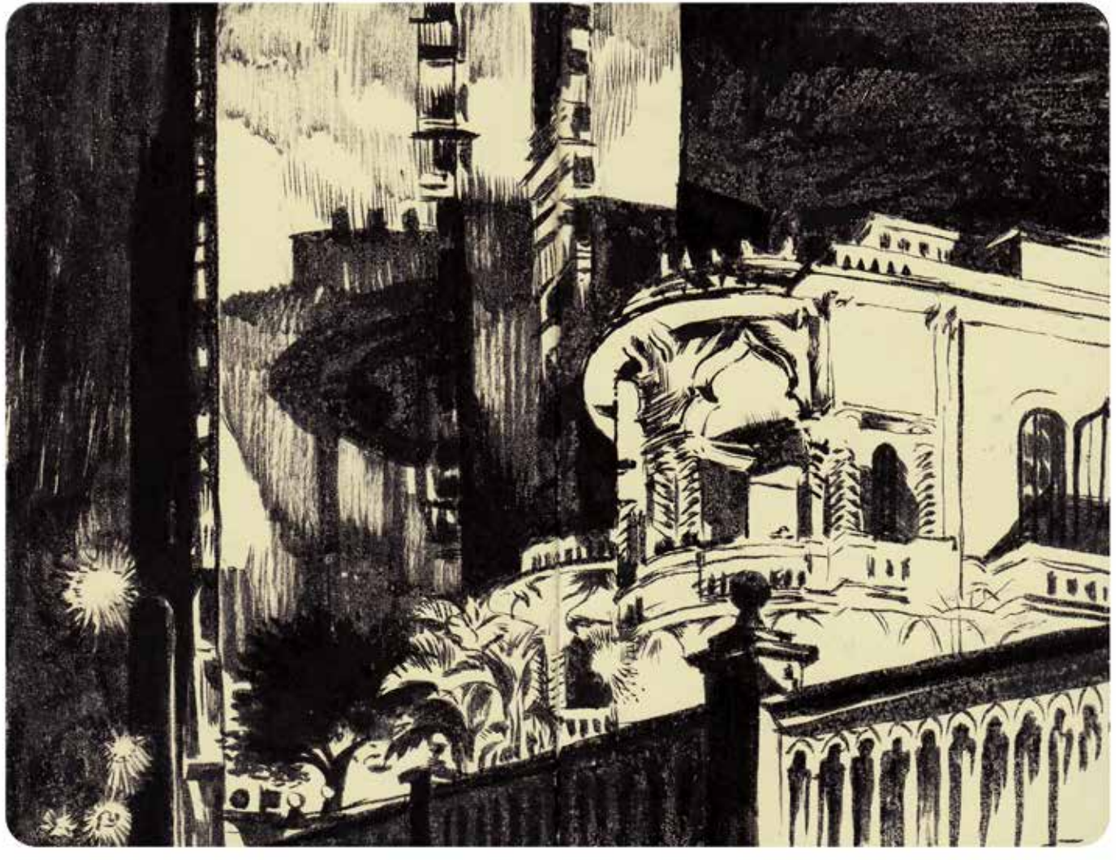
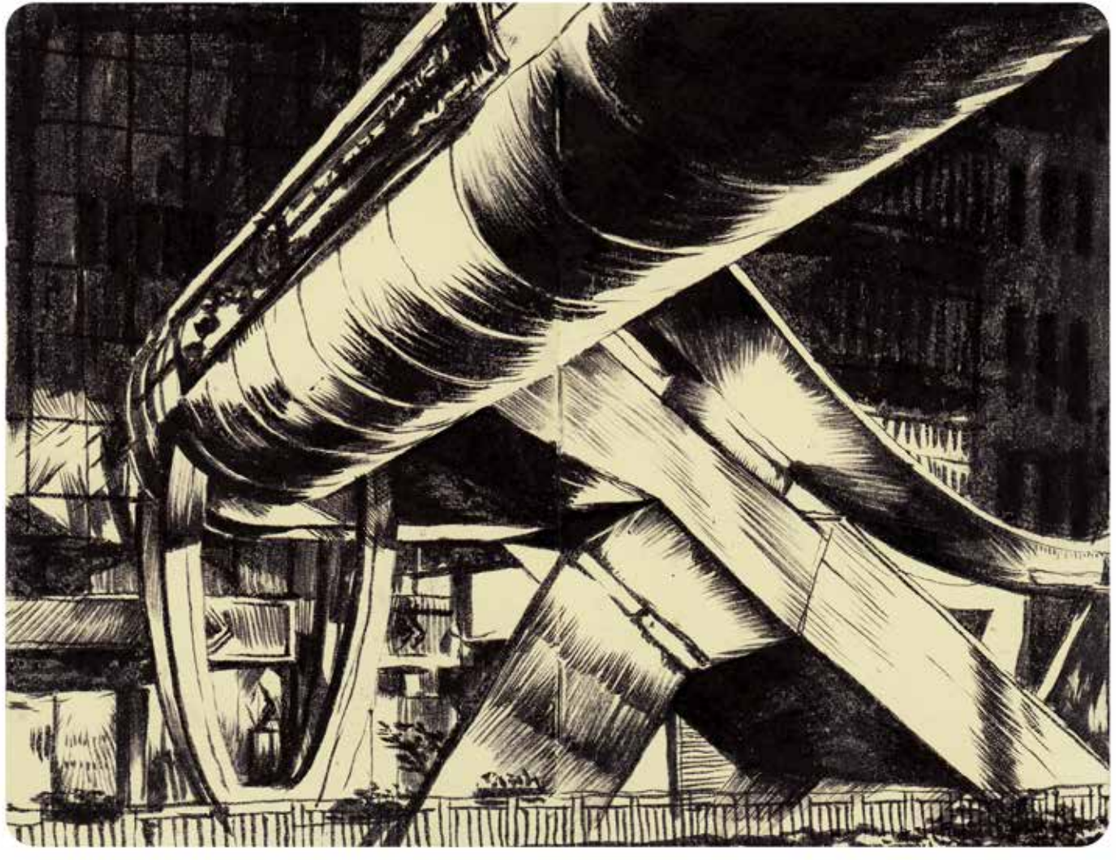
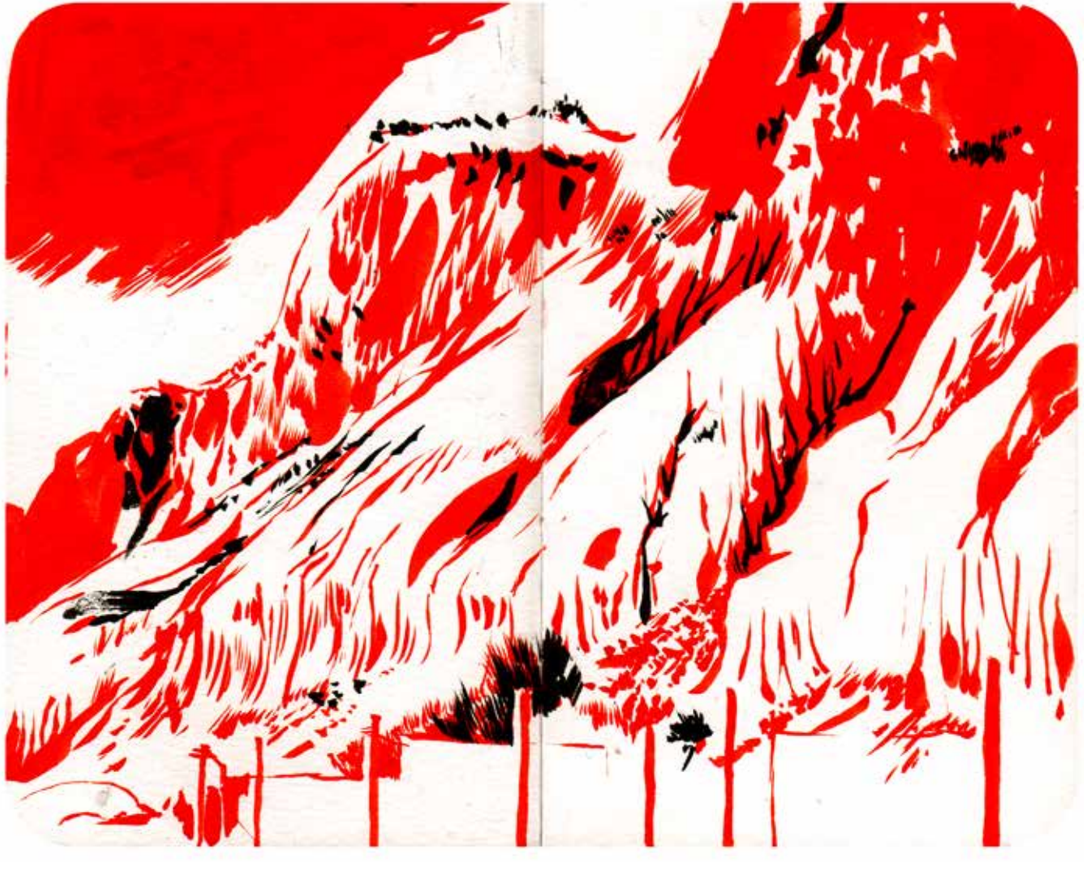


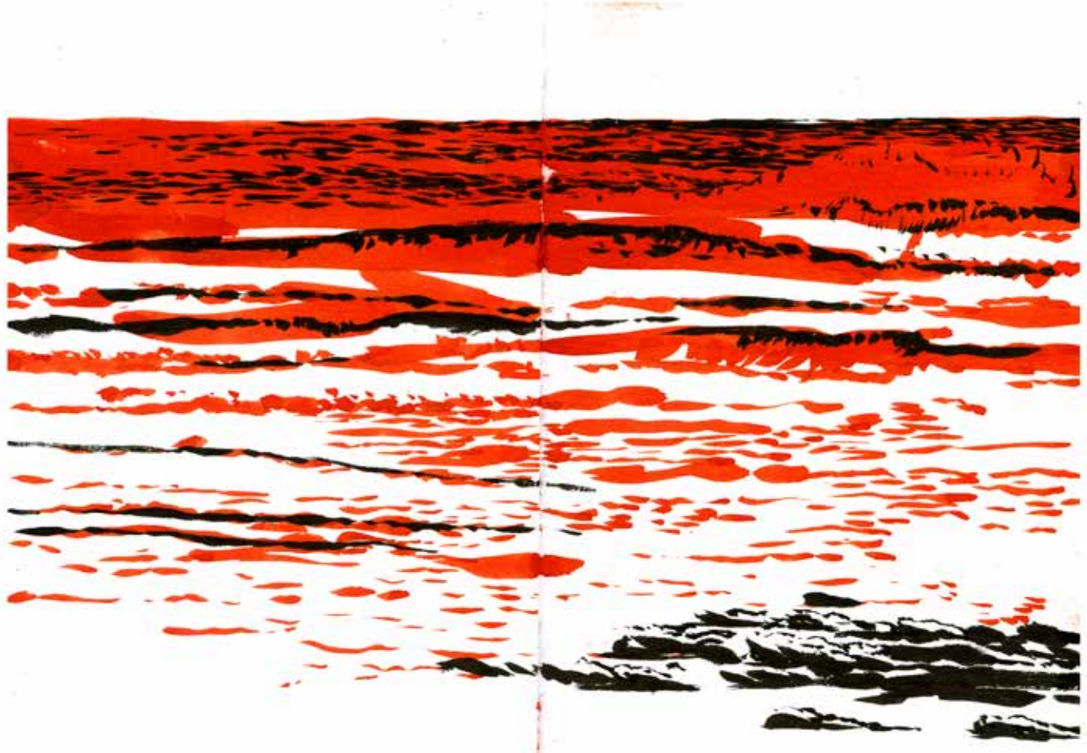


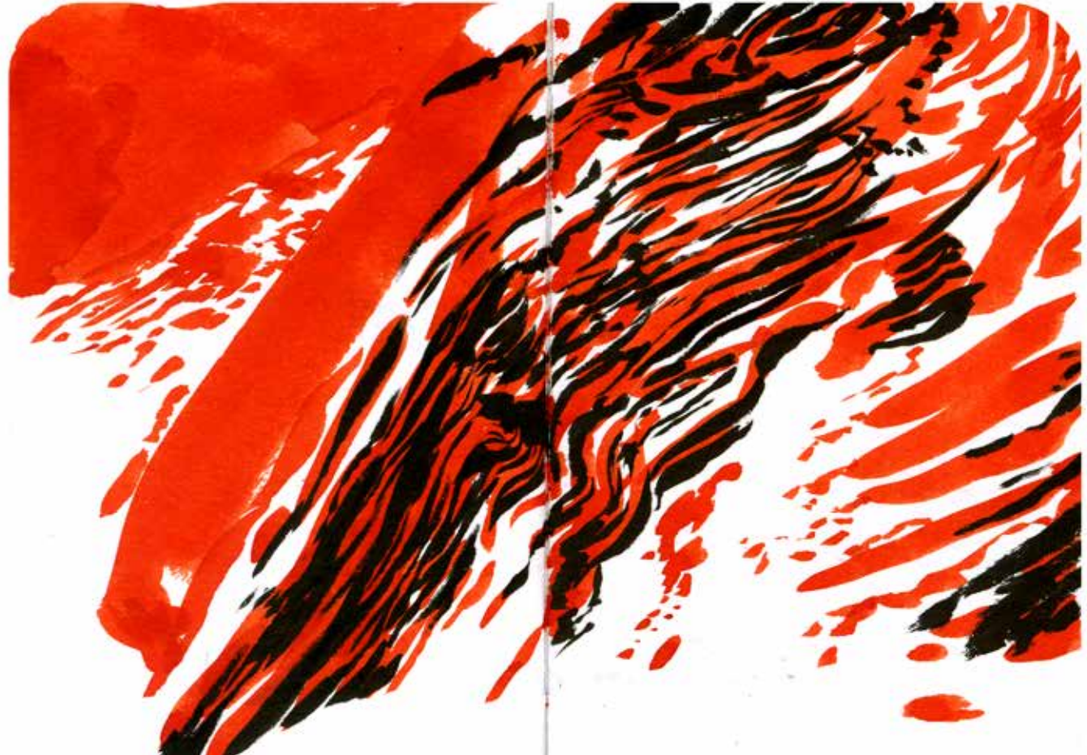
Governador Nobre de Carvalho Bridge, Macau, China 02 May 2012

Falésia Beach, Portugal 14 May 2012



Vale Figueiras Beach, Alentejo, Portugal 16 May 2012





Coronel Mesquita Street, Macau, China 27 Jun 2012

In the taxi, after giving him the address in Cantonese, the taxi driver says:

— "What's the block sir?"

I'm surprised that he speaks to me in English, unusual in this corner of the world. I hesitate, but I remain faithful to the local guidebook.

— *"Sap sam."*

The driver then says something in Cantonese, that I obviously don't understand. He's confused.

— "Oh, I thought you could speak Cantonese!"

— "I'm sorry, I only know the numbers." "And my address." "And *momantai*."

We laugh. He goes on, enthusiastic.

— "You know? Cantonese is very difficult. It took me some time to learn. Mandarin is a little easier, but Cantonese is hard."

Intrigued, I begin to think the taxi driver is from Beijing, or another more northerly region of the country.

— "So you're not from Canton?"

— "I'm from Indonesia, had to learn this language. 30 years ago... Where are you from?"

— "Portugal."

— "Portuguese? I speak Portuguese!"

— "Really? So you know all the relevant languages here."

As if knowing Portuguese was of any use in this country. But it is easy to feel flattered by others' interest in what is ours. I am continuously amazed by the street names in Portuguese, by the police uniforms that still say *Polícia* in reflective letters. I was commenting the other day with someone, that the logic of this apparent tolerance on the part of the Chinese escapes me. Of what use was Portuguese in the territory? They explained that perhaps it was a way of making Macau distinctive, picturesque, different from China proper. In a sense, it's a way of having something from the outside within, and that was always the purpose of Macau. It's a *Portugal dos Pequeninos*[vii], idealized way before the transplanted Venice of the Venetian Casino, which looks so kitsch to so many. It occurs to me now that the impulse was always the same. The Middle Kingdom contains curiosity by the millions.

I continue to speak English with the taxi driver because his thick Portuguese accent isn't very trustworthy. It's better to play it safe. He goes on.

— "Portuguese is easier, Cantonese is more difficult." I give up, Portuguese it is.

— "And Indonesian, easy or difficult?"

— “It´s like Portuguese, easy.”

— *“*It is? How so?*”*

— “It’s easy! You say *sapato*[viii] , we say *sepatu*. *Manteiga*[ix] , we say *mentega*. So Portuguese is easy for us… Here we are, *sap sam*, number thirteen…”

I’ll have to do more research. I’ve heard that Japanese has several words of Portuguese origin, but I didn’t know that in Indonesia there were also signs of sixteenth-century contagion. We were sowing more Latin than I thought, with the help of crucifixes and trinkets. And some gunpowder to spice it up.

— “And how do you say “thank you”?”

— *“Terima kasih!”*

— *“Terima kasih”*

— “Thank you, sir!”

I PRESSURED THE CHECK-IN GIRL, BUT NO LUCK. TWO SEPARATE FLIGHTS with a layover in Dubai, seven hours each, window seats all occupied. Sometimes I can get a seat in the emergency exit row, more spacious, but not even that. The lady seemed genuinely worried about my well-being, a little bit too much. She was apologizing that the flight was full, was trying, speaking on the phone with someone who seemed to have some power to move the pieces on the board more freely, according to their own rules. But no, no luck. Emirates Airlines had recently opened a route through Dubai, which functioned as a more affordable turntable, for those like me who like to hop between hemispheres. The meridians acting as barriers on an obstacle course. Perhaps they'd been too ambitious or imprudent. In an era of *online sites*, with automatic price comparisons, it's expected that flights with lower than usual prices, to the other side of the world, would attract immediate attention. The result: everyone likes a good bargain, preferably with a window seat. "I don´t even think I can put you in the aisle." This aisle thing... I never understood why some people like the aisle. The window is the thing, the hallucination of a landscape which inclines, the scale of which shifts at the whim of the pilot, with the option of leaning against it and sleeping peacefully. Once someone explained that those who choose the aisle want to go to the bathroom more easily, a woman's thing. It had never occurred to me. Like when a female friend of mine explained that there are women who sit on the beach right at the edge of the sea because they want to relieve themselves without anyone knowing. I had always thought that the female gender was more prone to bucolic contemplation...

It's OK, I get used to the idea that I will have to spend a few hours trying to sleep without touching the two strangers that will function as frames for me. I note the efforts of the *check-in* girl.

On the plane, I head to my assigned seat, 10F. But something isn't right. Instead of the usual seat stuck between so many others, I encounter an armchair from the examination room of a futuristic psychologist's office, with so much space that I imagine doing a tribal dance around it. I explain to the airline hostess that I didn't ask, and especially didn't pay, for that, to which she replies that the flight is too full, so they had to assign business class seats to some people in economy. Slowly it occurs to me that the first girl, from *check-in*, is the one responsible for this providence. Naughty, she decided to give me a little surprise. It seems kindness and generosity still exist.

The child trapped inside of me sits and inspects its new toy. It's a cocoon of compartments, buttons, options. When I was a child I liked the Transformers, and this chair can turn into a bed. I stretch out my feet and can't touch the armchair in front. I try all the buttons and the *touchscreen* control panel on the left, and things begin to move, a partition goes up, uncontrollable, the giant screen way up in front, on the back of the chair ahead, lights up and informs me that I have tons

of luck, there are a bunch of things that I can look at, touch, feel, experience. It's going to be an excitement-filled journey. It's written there, so it must be true.

I feel bad about the partition that went up between me and the person seated to my left. I don´t want them to think I'm antisocial; it's good to observe good neighborly rules among cocoons. I say cocoon, but the word that more readily jumps out is *pod*, which in English also means shell. That's what technology is good for these days, to seal us off in our own comforts. And to make us think of words in English. To remain entertained, to confine our world to a bunch of social media tools in order to share it virtually. But we are like those elderly folks who observe the outside through the window all day. Our windows are more sophisticated, but harder to shut. They keep us indoors. We forget that from the cocoon and the pod something new is supposed to emerge, a step in a transition that allows for new flights. Let's see what we transform ourselves into in a few years, into moths or butterflies or *drones*.

On the other side of my rebel partition, which refuses to go back to its initial position, is a nun. I remember her from the line at *check-in*. She looks like a novice, dressed head to toe in white, young, tiny. She has Asian features, but dark skin, perhaps she is Indonesian or Malaysian. Her companion is an older woman, less defined by the habit, uncovered head, graying, Portuguese. I remember noticing how different they were from the cute nuns of Hollywood fantasies. In films,

women of the clergy are always one step away from being seduced into sin by one of us, virile and irresistible men. But these nuns seem to have made their choice. The arms are thin, rigid, from daily chores, from work. Their tense and dried out bodies try not to be feminine, and they almost succeed, shy underneath those habits. Different cocoons. They know what they are waiting for.

They are strange, nuns. In the USA they rebelled against the papal hierarchy. They dared claim that Christ preaches tolerance and compassion, even towards minorities, towards those less fortunate and, yes, towards women. Dangerous ideas to the central, masculine power of the Catholic Church. Men who do not understand that a nun can try to stop being a woman, but that it will be more difficult for her to stop being a mother.

I try all the buttons and I find a balance control for my cocoon/armchair. *Podchair*. It's impossible to feel truly comfortable, anticipating the next necessity and the respective instant solution. But much better than traveling in economy of course. And my neighbors? The novice's screen is off, everything seems calm, maybe she's asleep. I peek over the partition and it makes sense. She's reading a book, calmly. In that moment, she is soaring higher than me.

The plane begins its descent, as if coming to rest on a ghostly bed of skyscrapers. The urban structure is intuited by the constellations of illuminated windows on dark, elegant, geometrical silhouettes, contrasted by the low clouds, which reflect the nocturnal lights of the metropolis. Night in Hong Kong has an inverted landscape, the sky full, embossed with vapor, solidified by the indirect light of the city, hovering above the sparkle of millions of homes which have not yet gone to bed. And perhaps they never do.

My first plane journey ends here, eight thousand kilometers from home, 22 hours from departure. At 16 years old. On exiting into the night air, I am hit by the hot air from the plane's engine. Or so I think, until I notice that the reactor is underneath the wing, way back. What I feel is the South China atmosphere, humid, persistent, gelatinous. The air, impossibly hot, forms beads of viscous sweat on the skin. Clothing acquires a new friction against the body, sticking to it. Even thoughts become muffled, along with the surrounding sounds, absorbed by the air, aquatic.

Perhaps that's why Hong Kong and Macau exist mostly at night within me. I arrived here for the first time 20 years ago.

Macau is multifaceted, wrinkled, and more dramatic when lit by street lamps. It becomes projected, phantasmagoric, graphic.

Walking the streets at night, you can find, on every corner, some detail that would look good on paper. The telecommunications and electrical wires are lines that connect the facades, that vandalize them. Instead of graffiti, people express themselves with clandestine utilitarian interventions that superimpose themselves on everything. The impossible bustle of the day is implied by its vestiges at night. Not only the asphalt, but also the facades of the buildings, show signs of the previous day's skids.

It's the only city I know where you feel no fear in the streets after hours. It´s as if the all--encompassing quality of the air, hot and humid, adds an extra level of security. A return to an amniotic environment of contemplative freedom.

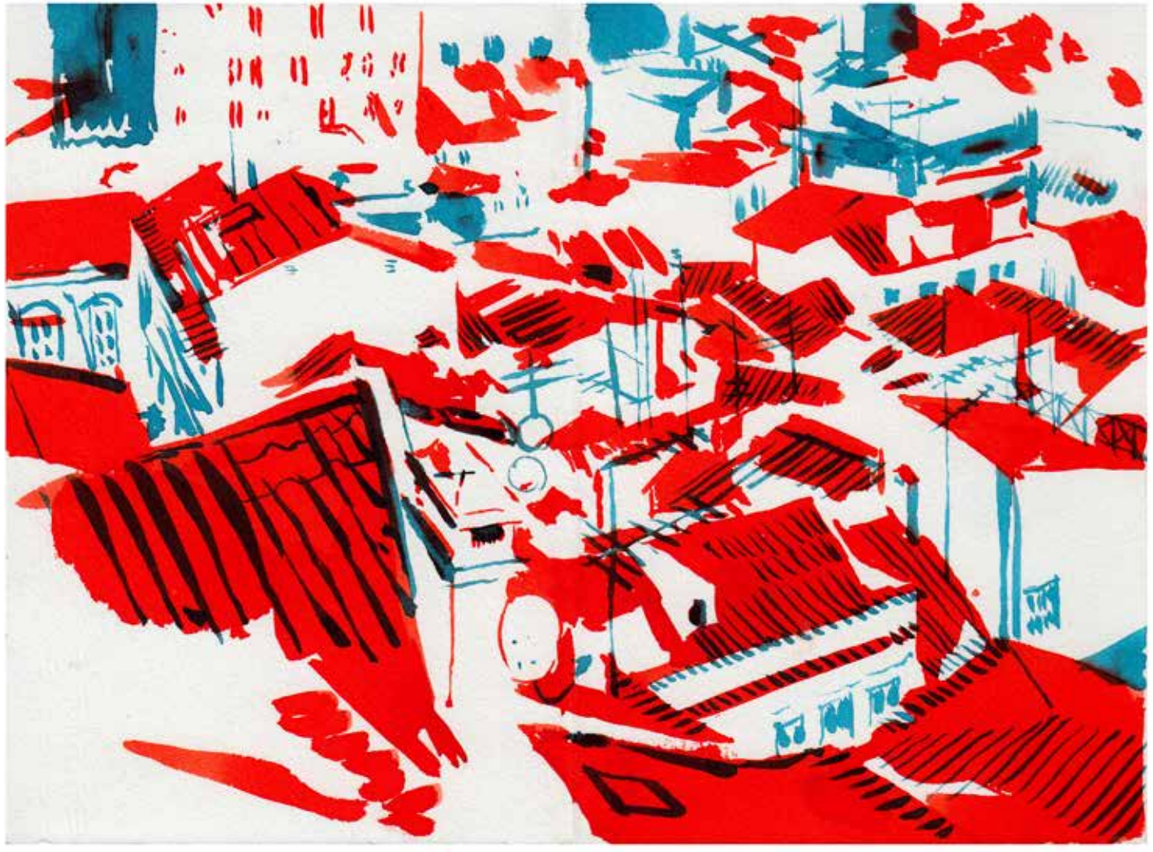
THE RESTAURANT IS SMALL, BUT THERE IS A FIRST FLOOR WHERE THERE is almost always a free table. I am looking for a quiet place, so I sit upstairs, where only one other table is occupied. I tuck myself in near the group of five Chinese adolescents who are eating in silence. They wear uniforms from the same school, but with slight personal variations that makes them unique, human. Those that keep their jackets on reveal the name of the school, Brito.

I like to eat and read, and these days the most practical is to read on the phone, challenging all supposed rules about healthy reading. It's more practical than a book, you don't have to keep the pages open, you don't have to carry it before and after the meal. After a few minutes of attempting to find a hierarchy in managing the phone and the silverware, I notice the silence. No one speaks at the next table. Three of them are looking at their phones, one eats pasta greedily, and his mouth is full, another, huge, doesn't seem like much of a talker and looks around like a nightclub bouncer. One of them looks up from his phone and in my direction, intrigued. The one eating spaghetti lifts his gaze from the plate once in a while to try and see what his friend is so intently observing on his phone, focused. But no one speaks. Not a sound. They say we live in the Information Age, and are constantly surrounded by communication tools. We know what is happening with all of our friends and idols, or at least we have that illusion. Because what we are given is the idealized script that each one writes for his own life, in real time, on social media. Living has become an

aesthetic act. In the past, there were people who even spent money on books that would reveal a certain social status. They didn't even need to read them. These days there is a dematerialization of ostentation, in the sense that the books we expose on our shelves no longer count, what counts is rather what we say we read and what we quote. The trips we take, the food we eat, the opinions we have, the texts we write. Everything backed up by the thousands of photos taken at that sublime and transcendent moment, adequately lived and filtered by a phone screen that we quickly place in front of everything we might want to remember. We love, we travel, we eat and dance for an audience, most of the time imaginary, because not all of us are Hollywood stars or have people who are interested in what we're doing. I can't but think that, though the human species is by nature social, it doesn't mean it is more naturally so in a network. Because the interaction becomes internal and constantly varied, without a corresponding physical component. It's abstract, an embryonic behavior of telepathy. We already know everything we want to know before coming face to face with whoever is on the other end of the line. And we are thirsty for more, looking for more now, this instant. At the dawn of the digital revolution, there were those who said that reading was in danger. But today it seems that speech is what is becoming obsolete, while we read what others write, think, desire, do, disdain.

I looked up from my phone and caught the young Chinese guy still looking at me, as if I were the most interesting subject at that moment. All the others at the table were in their own private worlds, surfing an infinity of realities at their fingertips like me.

We looked each other in the eye and I realized that neither of us was really there.



Alfama Rooftops, Lisbon, Portugal 13 Feb 2013

I WATCH THE OSCILLATING WING, DANCING TO THE RHYTHM OF THE turbulence, which shakes the plane as it descends into Istanbul and, as usual, I remember that, statistically, the riskiest times on a flight are take-off and landing. In Lisbon I'll have to go straight to a family friend's wake, from my mother's generation. If I get there. Paranoid, I always think the plane is going to crash, that a life can change or end in an unexpected blink of an eye. But I force myself to roam the world, despite the fear. After all, you either live or you don't, and it's not advisable to leave things half done.

We atheists have a strange relationship with death. There is nothing to be anxious about or to fear. We simply cease to exist, which equates to a non-feeling, neither good nor bad. It's like feeling pre-birth. Or the absence of someone we never got to meet. But fear remains, more or less defining our lives. I get the need to be religious, and I don't believe religion will ever be completely replaced by a more enlightened vision of the world based on things that can be tested, known. We will always have a need to explain the fear of death, simply because it exists, immune to clever rationalizations for its lack of logic. And as much as biology, sociology, psychology and genetics may explain the reasons for our survival instincts, protection of offspring and other innate behaviors, the fact is that the anxiety is there, embedded in us. Asking for a simpler and immediately tangible reason.

Fear 06 Feb 2013

I try to rationalize what I feel as I watch the wing fighting to sustain the enormous machine that is magically trying to safely land me on the ground, on the tar hidden below, beneath the fog. Perhaps the reason for the fear is not knowing, never being able to predict if and when something will go wrong. The other day I had to draw the caricature of a man who discovered he had terminal cancer and would only live a few more months. Having lived his whole life with anxiety over his own existence, he was now calm and happy. The wait was coming to an end, he could relax.

I think that, yes, that might be the source of fear. That's also why I don't like horror movies. When dealing with death, it's the *suspense* that kills me.

Limoeiro Square, Lisbon, Portugal 13 Feb 2013

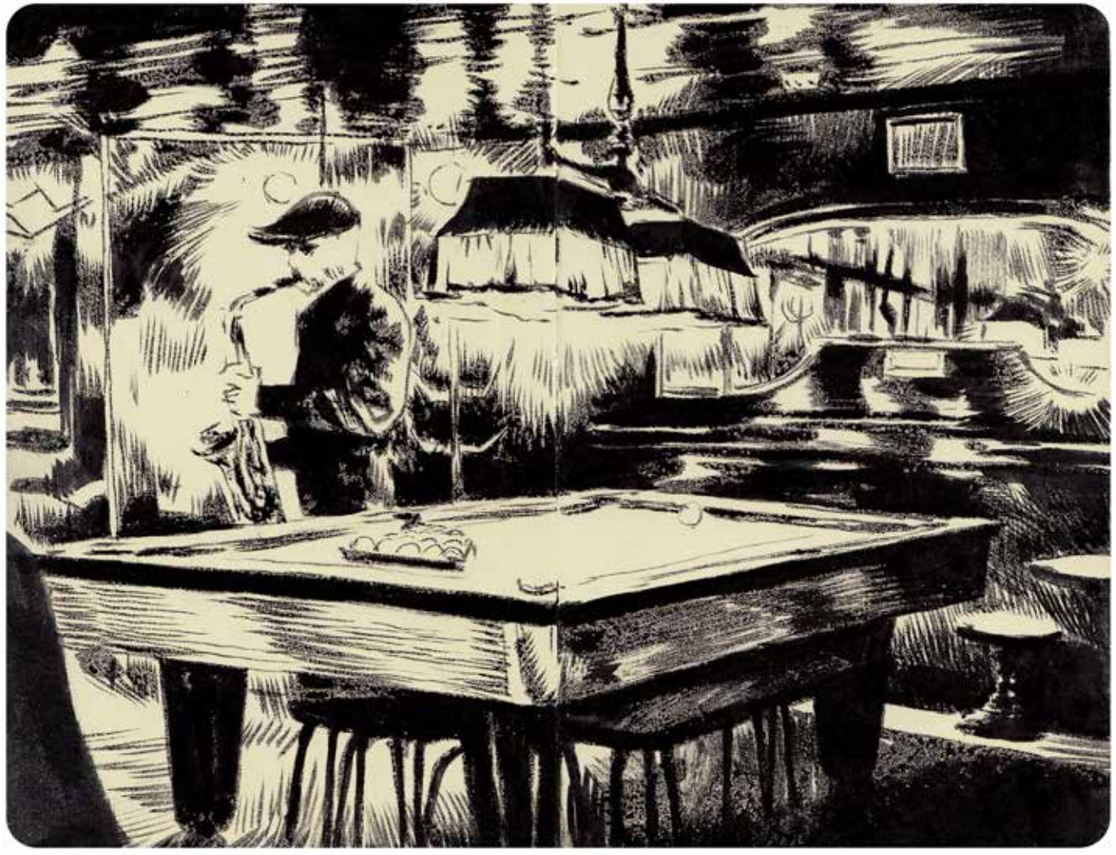
Augusto Gil Park, Graça, Lisbon, Portugal 14 Feb 2013

Santa Clara Field, Lisbon, Portugal 17 Feb 2013

Alfama Rooftops, Lisbon, Portugal 17 Feb 2013

Parque das Nações Marina, Lisbon, Portugal 19 Feb 2013

View from Nossa Senhora do Monte, Lisbon, Portugal 27 Feb 2013



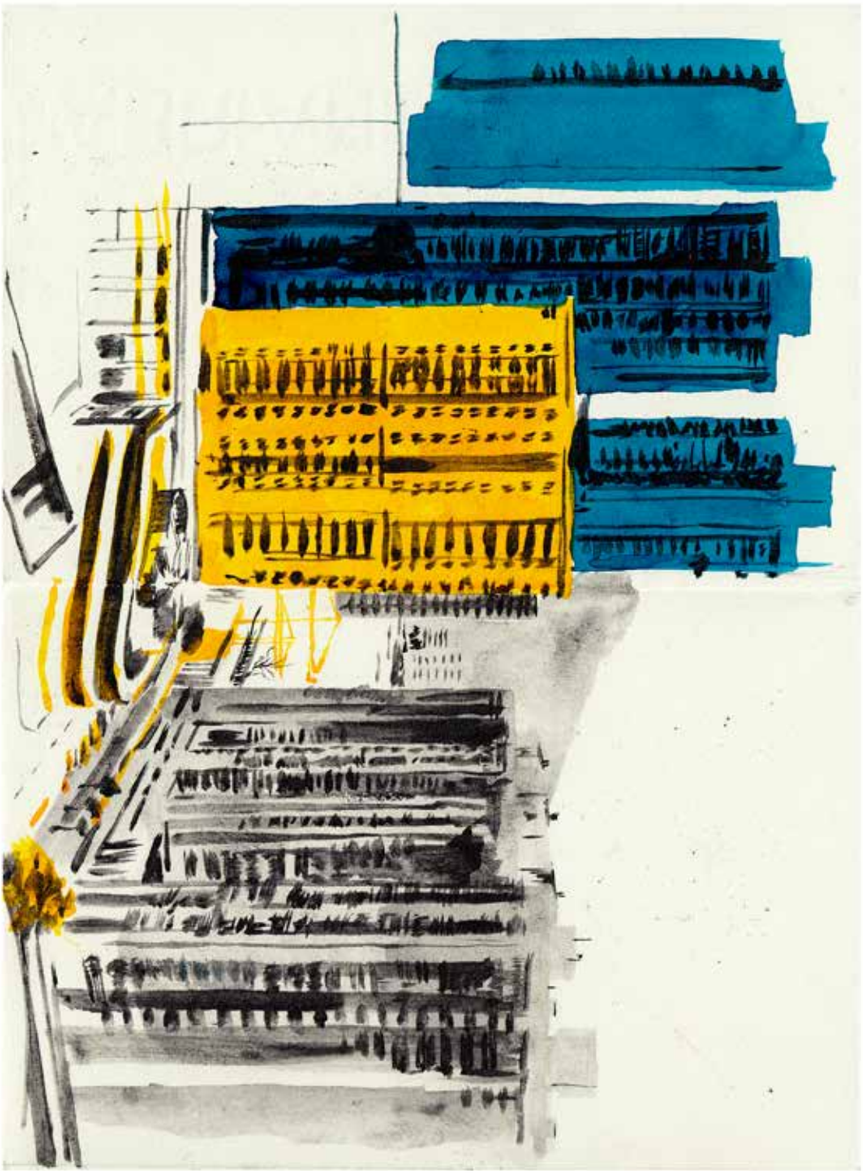
I WAKE UP IN THE MORNING, OPEN THE BLINDS IN THE ROOM, AND IT'S the usual view, the park at the entrance of the building with the trash cans lining the sidewalk. There is a middle-aged couple sorting through one of the cans. It's not the first time I see them, it's a familiar scene. Right next to them, as usual, there is a parked van, doors wide open, revealing that it belongs to the couple. Their obvious complicity, silent, calm and methodical, lends an air of dignity to their activity, even though it's speckled by other people's trash. Inside the van, you can make out the spoils of uncountable searches through Lisbon's discarded trinkets. I assume it's a daily routine for this couple, a survival ritual. I ask myself what might they find every day that justifies their continued search. Pride and ingrained notions of class don't permit us to focus even our curiosity on a trash can, we're more used to gathering shells and polished pebbles on the beach, or meatless bones in the countryside. We have an instinctive preconception of nature as clean, that we aren't a part of it, for better or worse. In reality, I believe you can find many useful things in urban trash, perhaps even enough to eliminate most of your material desires. Just shift your gaze from the window to the inside of your home, and you can see that half of our belongings could very well be inside one of those trash cans. But for now everything is here at home, protected by ties of abstract sentimentality and laziness.

Almost simultaneously, on the same sidewalk, a knife sharpener, and his Pan flute to attract customers, enters the scene. He walks by the couple, busy around the trash cans, without noticing them, eyes glued to the residential buildings' windows above, always playing his flute. The sound he makes attracts stares and childhood memories, and speaks of a time when our lives were not yet wholly composed of disposables. He hopes that before we throw out our knives and scissors we will call him to breathe life back into that which hardly serves us anymore.

All you have to do is open a blind and, with an open window, choose from among the past, present and future. Throw away, resist or try to salvage what's left.

Praia Grande Srteet, Macau, China 05 Apr 2013

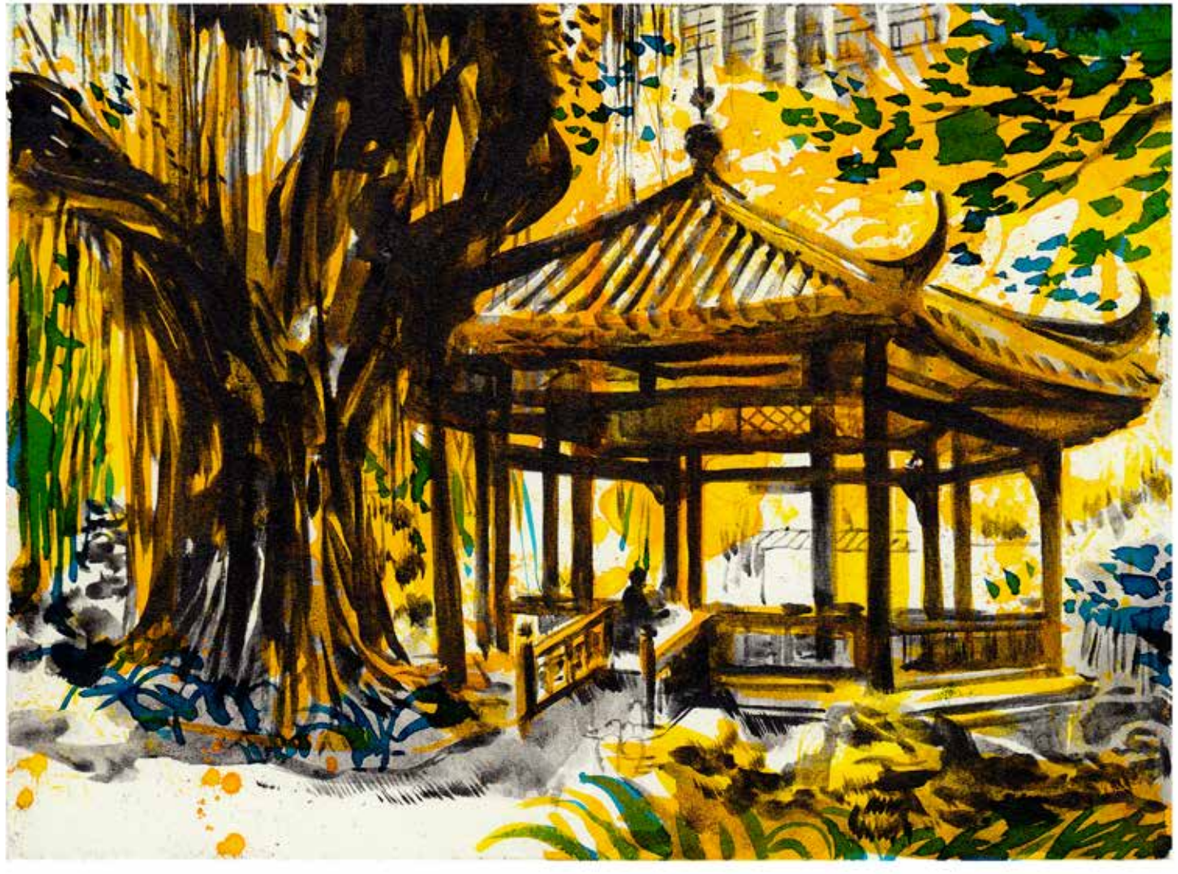
View from Mong-Ha Fort, Macau 07 Apr 2013



Fai-Chi-Kei, view from the Mong-Ha Fort, Macau, China 07 Apr 2013

Rooftops seen from Mong-Ha Fort, Macau, China

Coronel Mesquita Street, Macau, China



The last three days were a blur. I travel without taking a va-cation, and I work on the go. In Macau I draw Thatcher for London, while I criticize the Portuguese government in a *cartoon* for the *Diário de Notícias* newspaper in Lisbon. I doze, dream of family and friends on the other side of the world, I have nightmares, wake up and force myself to accept an assignment to do an evocative illustration of the North American masterpiece *Moby Dick* for *Vanity Fair*. I'm at the end of my resources. Work always traveled before me to some corners of the world, and moves more quickly. And since last year, I decided to travel as well, constantly, but in the opposite direction of the drawings, in a symmetrical pendularity. It just happened that way, I'm not even sure why yet. If I make a drawing for the USA I should be in Macau, if I think of a drawing for London, I might be in Mozambique, when I get *email* from Zurich, I desire Shanghai. It is, without a doubt, a sign that the places through which I like to travel don't have a market for my work. It's also not uncommon for a father and his children to have different tastes. I run from Winter and the drawings seek out fireplaces.

Without thinking or sleeping enough, there is another boat, an airport, a plane, layovers after layovers, an endless succession of light meals in which one of the choices is always *chicken*, after *check-in*, before the X rays, metal in the tray, *do you have liquids*, *boarding pass please*, *would*

you like something to drink, fasten seat belt, prepare for landing, transfer desk, moving walkways, moving walkways. I know I move through these places because I see my reflection being dragged along, motionless, through an endless glass wall which is superimposed onto an infinity of planes of various colors and potential destinations. Mine was chosen without much thought, without research or preparation. They were dice rolled a week ago, and I've already forgotten why, it no longer matters. Finally, I wait, with a vacant look, next to a rubber conveyor belt which suddenly begins to move, I pick up the last vestige of familiarity that remains with me in the shape of a bag, and I exit onto the street after the last stamp, I blink and...

The man in front of a legion of many, many others, all dressed in the same khaki, asks me if I want a taxi, and I accept, telling him the final destination, which I can still remember: Afonso Guest House, Panjim, Goa.

The road snakes its way along a coast covered in tall vegetation, tropical. Coconut trees, palm trees as far as the eye can see and sometimes, half hidden by the omnipresent foliage, somewhat familiar buildings; I've seen this somewhere. They're churches, transplanted from some village in the Alentejo[x] or the Beiras[xi] . The scenery is peaceful, the sea calm, it's hot. I close my eyes and think of a bed, any bed, doesn't matter where.

It's seven-thirty in the morning, and at the Afonso Guest House I'm greeted by a lady who must be the matriarch of the clan, of the family business. With extreme kindness, she asks me in perfect Portuguese if I am André. I look around, trying to absorb the famous Fontainhas neighborhood, where they say Portugal still hides and survives the sweeping of history and of the Indian national pride. "Looks like Portugal, doesn't it?" she asks, making me curious. I ask her "Have you ever been in Portugal?" "No", she says smiling, "but it's what people usually tell me." I'm inclined to agree, it looks like something I've seen in Portugal, or not, like something I've seen on a postcard of Portugal sold on the Rua Augusta[xii] or, wait, it´s not even that, it looks a lot like all the places scattered around the world that people say look like Portugal. Like the original, not so much. It looks like some streets in Maputo and Pemba, like historical neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro, like alleyways in Macau in which the colonial balconies are supported by iron beams that keep them from breaking. It's a Portuguese architecture that tries to deal with the heat, that allows the air to flow. But it also reminds me of some manors up in my grandfather's region, the Beira Alta[xiii] , that my mother explained were houses built by folks who came back from Brazil loaded with money and a tendency towards colonial architecture. It's a Portugal that doesn't realize it is no longer the same and cannot exist away from here, still containing that DNA we recognize, but which grew with its roots planted in this place, from the nutrients in this soil. It's ours, but not so much.

The room, that really is mine, for now. And the bed is perfectly adequate.

Upon waking, after a long period without sleep, there are always a few short moments during which you process the environment and, in some cases, you stop to think of what the hell happened. All I have to do is open the window, splash some water on my face, take a short walk down the street, and I reach the definite conclusion that I'd arrived at reluctantly as I opened my eyes after four hours of sleep. I'm in India. In an India, to be more precise. I sit at the outdoor terrace recommended by the guide and by the man at the *guesthouse*, and I order a beer. I missed this type of heat that forces you to drink stupidly cold beer, that relaxes the muscles and makes you lower your shoulders, stretch out your neck and throw back your head, eyes closed. "Hello, how are you?" asks the lady. She is standing at the edge of the porch where I'm sitting, and I can tell she is the owner of the place. She starts to chat, wants to know about me, where I´m from. She lights up. "Oh Portugal, I've been to Portugal! Fifteen days, I went to Fatima!"[xiv] I remember that on the visa request for India they ask what your religion is, an act of statistical caution which gives you a clue to everything bad that can happen in the name of whatever one's god or gods. I am more and more of a militant atheist, but one who believes in tolerance for all creeds. Knowing full well that a creed always has a fundamental intolerance for all other creeds. Nevertheless, the more I cross

borders and note that the things that unite us are much more numerous than those that separate us, the more intolerant I become of parochialisms, factionalisms and nationalisms, regionalisms and isms that more closely resemble "isthmuses", ever tighter strangulations that make it difficult to naturally go from a handshake to a hug among people who are so similar in their differences. But I don't have the guts to tell this lady, who is so sincerely lovable. She goes on: "In Fátima there was this olive tree. An olive tree! And all the olives, many many, were laying on the ground. Such a waste..." I understand what she means and start to smile, I tell her my name and ask for hers. "Linda, my name is Linda." The restaurant employee serving the outdoor terrace, who was listening to the conversation next to her, hanging back, expressionless, younger, almost nasty, reacts as if he were an automaton, and points above my head in a bossy manner. I look up and see a sign that looks like a street name, embossed into the facade, but on which is written Linda's Viva Panjim Restaurant. I understood, OK, her name is Linda. The employee goes back to the void, silent, next to the owner. Owner of the restaurant or his owner, it's not very clear. Back to the gist of things, I go back to smiling again. Of all the pomp and ritual surrounding Fátima, and without disparaging the genuine faith this lady must feel, what she was most shocked and marked by was this waste of olives from the sacred little olive tree. I explain that it was above the olive tree that the Virgin Mary appeared to the three little shepherds, the seed that gave rise to all the modern trap-

pings that surround it now, chapels, buses, promises, altars and candles. Amputated limbs made of wax, of hope. My tendency towards the humorous visual analogy gets ready to tell her that the olives are merely droppings from the lamb of god, therefore equally sacred, but that would be too much. She says she's used to living with what she has, no waste, no excess, simple. Inside the restaurant, besides the tables, there is also a desk where she works and gets paid among the clients as they eat. She tells me of her daughters, scattered around the world, and I think of drawings going where the wind takes them and of Anglo-Saxon fireplaces. How many people who have known hunger have taken away the image of the olives on the ground in Fatima? I tell her that here, in her country, there are also devotion, monuments, imposing historical presences. A richer and more intricate mosaic of millennial beliefs. "Yes, but Fátima is Fátima" she says patiently.

A bell tolls, it surprises me. Once again I am teleported back to the Beira Alta, woken by the peal of the church bells of Escalhão[xv], my grandfather's village. But it's Saint Sebastian's chapel, right next door. "Do you hear this bell?" she jumps up, alert, looking at some unspecified spot in the sky, an elementary schoolteacher's finger pointing. "It means someone died." I'm confused; how does she know it isn't something else? "It's this kind of ding, ding-dong… ding, ding-dong." The rhythm of the bell calls the neighborhood to mourn. She excuses herself with a smile and goes inside. She wants to call someone to find out who has departed. She has no more time for someone who has just arrived.

On the other side of the narrow alley from the porch on which I'm seated, I see newspaper clippings hanging, praising the Viva Panjim restaurant. And her photo, younger, with her full name. Linda de Souza[xvi] , of course. Portugal is, after all, here, so close.

Valvoline

Each departure is a reunion, each return an escape. Or maybe it's resignation. I go in search of not needing more than what I can carry, cutting the umbilical cord that unites us all to everything that accumulates around us. Objects, possessions, obligations, affections. At home I am slower, more anchored and inert. And I feel submerged. I ask myself what are all these things that fill the shelves and the cabinets surrounding me. In a hundred years no one will care about that book I held onto stubbornly, and which I never picked up again. Away from home I gain clarity and lightness, a leaner shape.

But I go around the world and no longer want to be a tourist. I don't want the pressure of having to see the sights, the monuments, the wonderful things. I want to be in places as if I had always been there, from time to time noticing something that deserves attention, naturally. Creating familiar habits whenever I can, spending more time at the corner coffee shop. Or inside, reading with the window open, allowing the words to become contaminated by the sounds of the unfamiliar streets. At times, the place I most want to delight in and get to know is Lisbon. Because I am irritated by everyone going around the world taking the same photos as everyone else, in the same places to which they are catapulted by jet, exhibiting upon their return a great tolerance for all the picturesque and typical and terribly funny customs, before badmouthing the color of their colleague's skirt. Their boss's toupee.

It's upon turning the corner of my home that I want to discover a nook in which I've never been, pause under the shade of that tree that I always walk around. Ask about the stories I should know about. I want to catch a tourist bus at Terreiro do Paço[xvii] and fly over the Baixa[xviii] by helicopter. I want to treat Lisbon well, speak more kindly with her, see her with seeing eyes. The more I think of it, the decline in our interaction is my fault. Because a lasting relationship requires work and dedication, a conscious surrender. And lasts a lifetime. I waste my time in places that never spent any time on me, and I turn my back on the city that made me.

Each departure is a trimming down to the marrow that we don't want to leave behind, but which might limit us. At home, as in any other place, we must make an effort not to turn our backs on ourselves. In our own city it is more difficult, because it's a mirror of those who depend on it and those who suffer with it, and often we don't like what we see. It knows us too well. At every return, we find the identity we usually wear at home waiting for us, scruffy where we left it in a hurry, ready to be shaken and worn once again. Whether the nakedness was worth it, remains to be seen.

We search for a meaning of life underneath the stones, made of beliefs calcified by time. I ask myself whether anyone truly finds anything, behind so many faces lit up by certainty. Not me, and I'm in trouble. But lately I was given a clue. It seems to me that such meaning must be profoundly individual, assuming each one of us is the author of one part of their journey and knows where they come from, they intuit where they want to go. Or where they don't want to go. I am suspicious of answers that are too easy or too all-encompassing, formulaic and loose, without content. Adaptable to everyone. It seems to me that the biggest sign that the search is over is when the need for it disappears. I found that I stop thinking about searching when I am drawing from sight, when I record what surrounds me. Drawing has the effect of slowing everything down, of immersing me in a particular corner of reality. I don't think about anything else other than what I am seeing. In fact, I don't think, I look. And it is the drawing that finds on my behalf.

Perhaps it's the closest thing to a purpose I'll ever find. Up until now I've always thought of the problem backwards. I don't have to know what to look for, I have to be aware of when I am not looking, and caress those moments. And that always happens when I sit down, calmly inhaling my surroundings, exhaling a drawing. In the end, maybe it's not that bad, I can foresee my role in the cosmic order of things. I am a mere witness.

I MUST BE HAVING A REACTION TO EVERYTHING THAT BOMBARDS US daily in the *media*, on the Internet, on social networks, and the like. Constellations of pulverized information that constantly stimulate us and give us the illusion that we know a lot about everything. In truth, we don't know anything to any great degree, we know a little about many things. We scratch the surface of countless topics, confident that, even if we're not correct, we can consult the cell phone and adjust our perception. We have relegated our memory to gadgets, and use them as external *backup* drives for our experiences, events, opinions, affections. Our brain becomes RAM, *random-access memory*, able only to process what is happening in real-time, but not able to retain anything. Disposable. What gets recorded is what counts. But the question remains: if what determines our behavior and our emotional response to what we experience is the memory of past events, how do we see the world when that memory is dislocated, outside of us? I remember once, as a kid, seeing my mother crying in front of the television. I didn't understand why, I was frightened and intrigued. They were showing images of a square with tanks, and a small man confronting them. They were saying it was in China. As an adolescent, I didn't yet possess the emotional baggage that would permit me to project myself into others' fight for freedom. An old man is more moved than a child, because empathy is based on the accumulated knowledge of personal experience, and in recognizing the same pain in others. Emotion is memory. A newborn cries from pain or want. That is the extent of its knowledge.

If the access to information has become almost ubiquitous, and if the production of information itself surrounds us all, daily, constantly, we have to develop the capacity to store it in a location with lots more space, outside our limited heads. But that implies the risk of losing the emotional cataloguing that we give our experiences, the map by which we navigate the world ethically and morally, that shows us the borders of our identity. How can we relate to our present and our future if our memory was the target of *outsourcing* to the inside of our cameras, computers, telephones, *tablets*? Because at a certain point, we no longer use our external memories exclusively for excessive records, we use them for everything. And we just increasingly record, photograph, film, without stopping and in transit, and we give up on what to do with the results.

Hence my skewed reaction. When I travel I increasingly insist on confining myself to smaller and smaller nooks in the vast new place I should be discovering. In extreme cases, I can spend days at the same outdoor terrace, in the same alleyway, immune to external temptations. It's just that I at least want to get to know that particular little corner, force the mind to assimilate, not delegate to the instant photograph. Perhaps that way I can always carry it with me, without help.

Agonda Beach, Goa, India 24 Apr 2013

We were heading to Palolem beach at high speed on a simple moped. The sinewy road was in complete darkness, lit only by the occasional vehicle that blinded us from the opposite direction. No helmet, in shorts and slippers, any driving mistake would have been disastrous, hundreds of kilometers from any possible assistance. I'm afraid of motorbikes, but in Goa there is no alternative. It's at these times, and only at these times, that I have to trust in providence. Nothing like a slight panic to give you a little faith.

Just a few hours ago, the driver was a complete stranger to me. In some way, these last few days have been a silent revelation. Agonda beach was recommended to me by some solicitous Goans, on two separate occasions, and I trusted in whatever chance had in store for me. After some *online* research I wound up at a cabin facing directly onto the beach. The lack of tourists marks the end of the season. At the restaurant, also perched on the beach, I've been almost always alone or accompanied by one or two lone couples. I've gotten into the habit of combining a swim in the sea with sunbathing and with work, as the latter never leaves me completely in peace. But the indispensable *wifi* connection is temperamental. And they change the *password* often.

Spending too much time alone can be dangerous. There are internal voices that become more audacious, and narrow us down into mental constructions that don't allow us to pause. For those, you don't need to *log in* and there is no *offline* switch. I try to accept experiencing things without sharing them with anyone, I try to not mind feelings of longing, or searching on the horizon for something that I know isn't there. I dive into the choppy sea and upon resurfacing look around, only to confirm that I'm alone on three kilometers of beach. The first instinct is to ask the reason for being there. And to know that the trick is to not ask any questions.

The sea becomes an authoritative presence, by virtue of the relentless hammering of the waves. At night it remains there, irremovable but in a constant spread out friction, a wall of ceaseless sound that defines the limits of my room and, at the moment, of my world. It's the sea that is slowly thinning me out little by little, shaking off futility and elliptical considerations. As the days go by, you simply begin to be, with few worries about what should be.

"Are you single? Also, are you gay?" The two questions, that leave me in an amusingly euphoric state, with the uncontrollable laughter of surprise, come from my host. I hadn't noticed him, but in the restaurant, when the network wasn't working and I was asking for a new *password*, I got up with the computer and headed to reception. "I can give you the password, come here." From a side table, an Indian man who looked about my age was calling me. I hadn't yet seen him here, and he

looked to be in transit, with a *laptop* and some books on the table. He told me he was one of the partners of the little compound of *bungalows*, a lawyer from Mumbai that had decided to invest in the Goan coast. I told him I was here just because. He made himself immediately available to show me some places that were not immediately visible in the tourist guides, but suddenly he stopped, smiled with a smirk in his eye and shot out: "Wait a minute, are you single? Are you gay?"

I always like to speak with people who verbalize those things I don't have the courage to say. And perhaps this clarification was necessary for us to move on to another phase of our interaction, more in tune with each other's interests. As for the slightly homophobic tone, for now I'll let it go, swept temporarily under the rug of cultural tolerance. "Yes, no." A laugh and onward. "To tell you the truth I only asked because I knew the answer already." A smart aleck, this one.

He has an interesting shape. Short and very dark, despite classifying himself as light-skinned, he looks like an Indian version of a young Al Pacino, always with a mocking smile on his lips. He says he wants to show me Palolem beach, that's where the bars are, full of madness and amusement, just off the road. At the end of the day he'll come looking for me. There goes the aquatic Zen introspection. Al Pacino made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

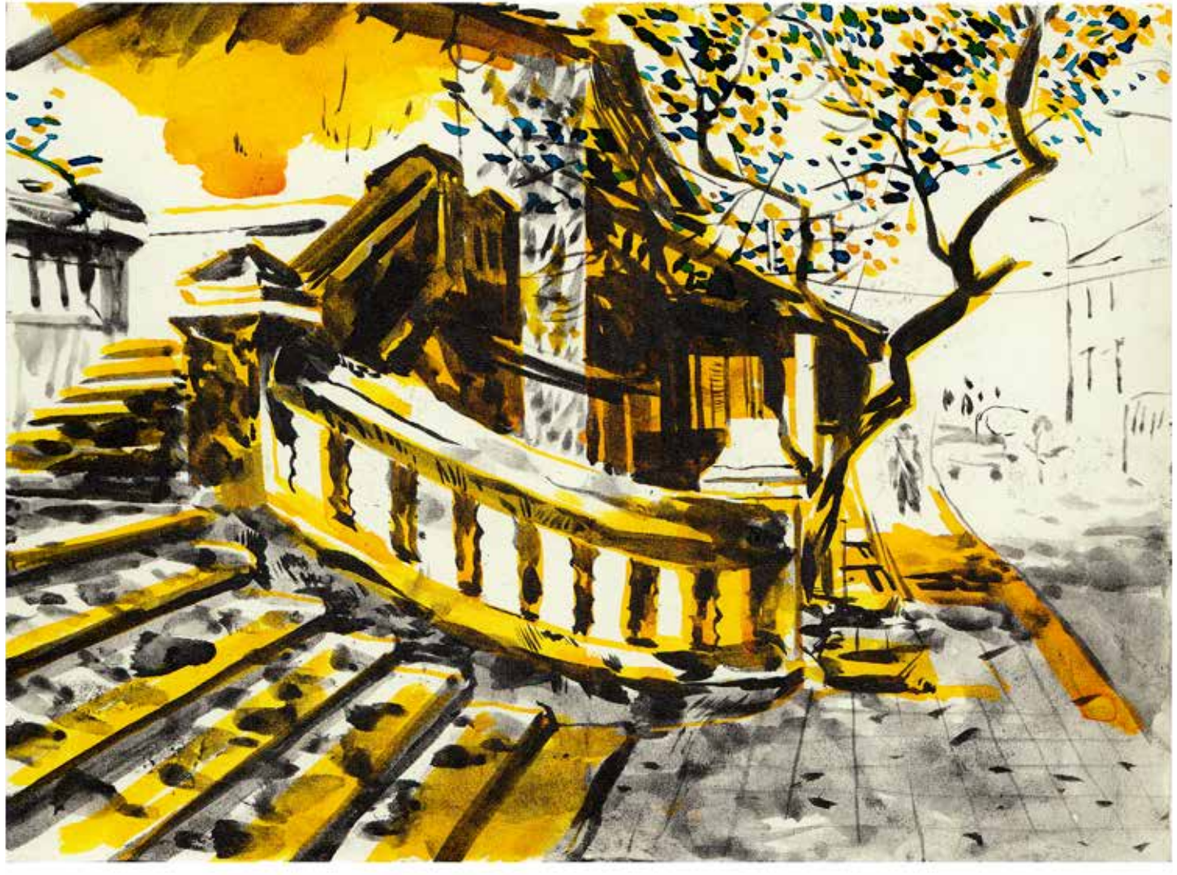
"So, do you want the car or the bike?" I look at the robust black car and at the fragile moped and I try to visualize the dark trajectory in both directions, one of which will probably be fueled by more than just gas. At least the car must have airbags. "No, no, the bike is safer. The car is too big for the road, it's more dangerous." I suppose some safety logic is also subject to the local customs of each country. It's all in the hands of Ganesha, the remover of obstacles.

Hanging onto the moped, I try to listen to Rahul philosophize, about Goa, India, women, spirituality and the Summer. Forgetting to keep his eyes on the road, he keeps looking back while trying to explain some sort of unified theory about the foreign woman, his yelling muffled by the speed. "André, you have to come here in high season! Lots of yoga girls! I love yoga girls! They are sooooo complicated!!!" He laughs at the Yoga certificates issued in 15 days, at the futile longing of the West for Eastern supermarket enlightenment. At people who come here searching with no time to discover.

Truthfully, this little tour to Palolem could only be by motorbike. This way, our laughter can run freely among the vegetation enveloped by the night, giving us the impression that the coconut trees are laughing with us. The laughter makes me close my eyes and relax, letting myself be driven. "Tonight, Andre, I want to see some people! I want to see some complex faces!"

Put like that, everything seems simple.

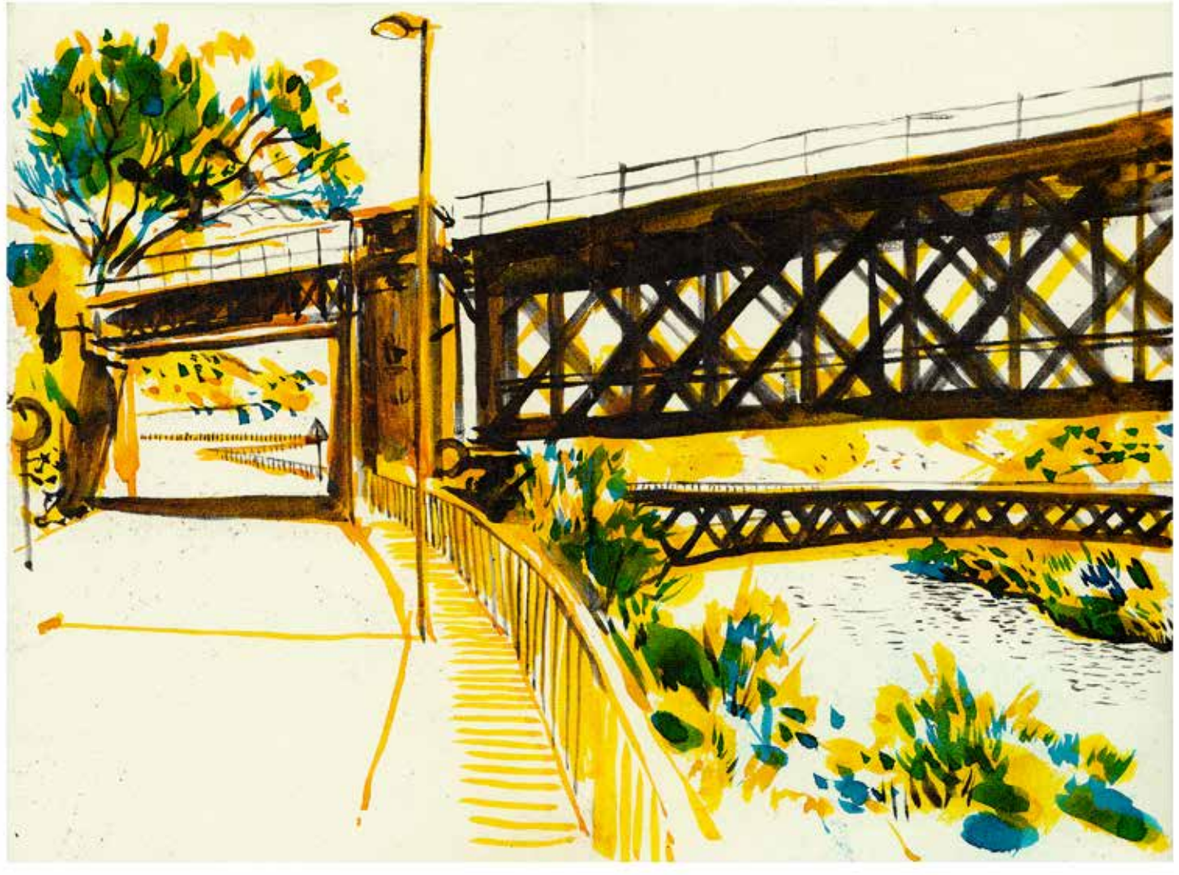
Imaculada Conceição Church, Panjim, Goa, India 05 May 2013



Emídio Garcia Street, Panjim, Goa, India 06 May 2013

República Hotel, Panjim, Goa, India 06 May 2013

Epilogue



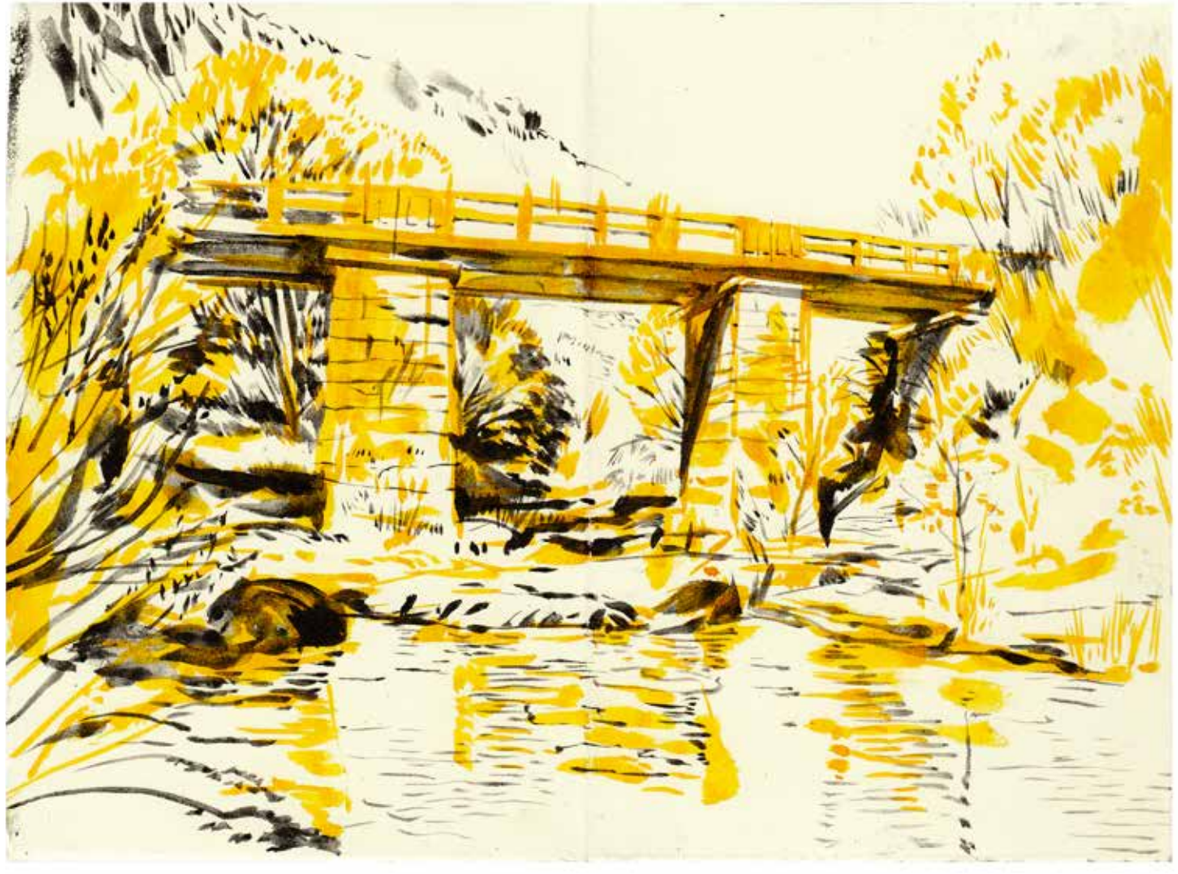
International Railway Bridge, Barca d'Alva, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Roman Bridge, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal

Aguiar River, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal

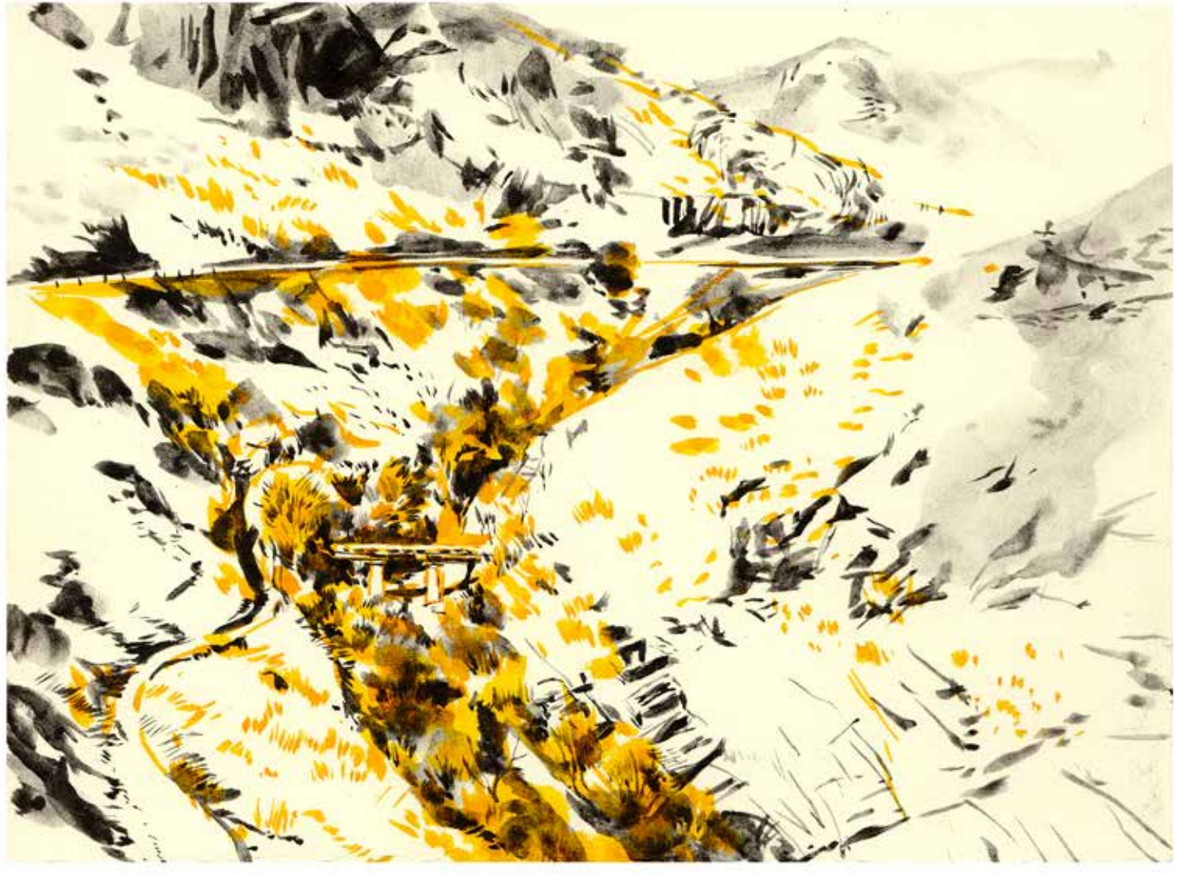
Medieval Fountain, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Dry Landscape, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013



Alminhas Bridge, Ribeira do Mosteiro, Trás-os-Montes, Portugal 25 Aug 2013

Côa River, Cinco Vilas Village, Portugal 25 Aug 2013



Endnotes

i Gil Vicente here refers to a bar named after one of the first great Portuguese playwrights and poets. His nickname was "The Troubador".

ii Any English words in italics reflect the fact that the author used an English word in the original Portuguese text, either because it is used as slang or because there is no translation available in Portuguese.

iii Fado is a Portuguese musical genre which can be traced to at least the 19th century. The word itself can be loosely translated as "destiny" or "fate".

iv Caneta vs Caneto – Portuguese nouns utilize gender determination. Masculine nouns generally end in "o" and feminine nouns in "a". "Caneta" is a feminine noun meaning "a pen" (the writing instrument).

v CPLP – The Community of Portuguese Language Countries. Formed in 1996; its aim is to further cooperation among its member nations.

vi BSE wine – Stands for "Branco Seco Especial" (Special Dry White), and is a wine from the Setubal wine region of Portugal.

vii Portugal dos Pequeninos – A park for children, situated in the region of Coimbra, which is contains miniature versions of Portugal's most famous monuments and landmarks.

viii Sapato – "shoe" in Portuguese

ix Manteiga – "butter" in Portuguese

x Alentejo – Southern-central region of Portugal

xi Beiras – Region of Portugal located between the Douro and Tagus rivers.

xii Rua Augusta – Famous shopping street in the "Baixa" neighborhood of Lisbon (see below).

xiii Beira Alta – Portuguese province in the North of Portugal.

xiv Fátima – Portuguese town where the Shrine of Fátima is located. Legend has it that it was here that the Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children in 1917.

xv Escalhão – Village in the North of Portugal.

xvi Linda de Souza–A reference to a Portuguese pop singer named Teolinda de Sousa, born in 1948, who emigrated to France and became well-known within the Portuguese immigrant community as Linda de Suza.

xvii "Terreiro do Paço" (Palace Terrace) or "Praça do Comércio" (Commerce Square) is a square located near the Tagus river in Lisbon.

xviii Baixa – Central commercial Lisbon neighborhood bordering the Terreiro do Paço and hosting numerous shops and restaurants.

Author´s Notes::

All the drawings in this book were done on site at the place they portray, by hand, in pen, acrylic paint, soluble graphite and watercolors, and reproduced here to scale, with the exception of the images on the cover, back cover and page 132, which are slightly larger in the original. At times, location and time limitations dictated that I complete some details from memory, but no photos were used as a reference, nor were any digital means used to manipulate the images. What you see is what I set to paper, with no correction.

On the other hand, the texts are an a posteriori record of events, situations and reflections, the translation of which into drawings would have been much too morose and inapropriate to the context in which they were lived.

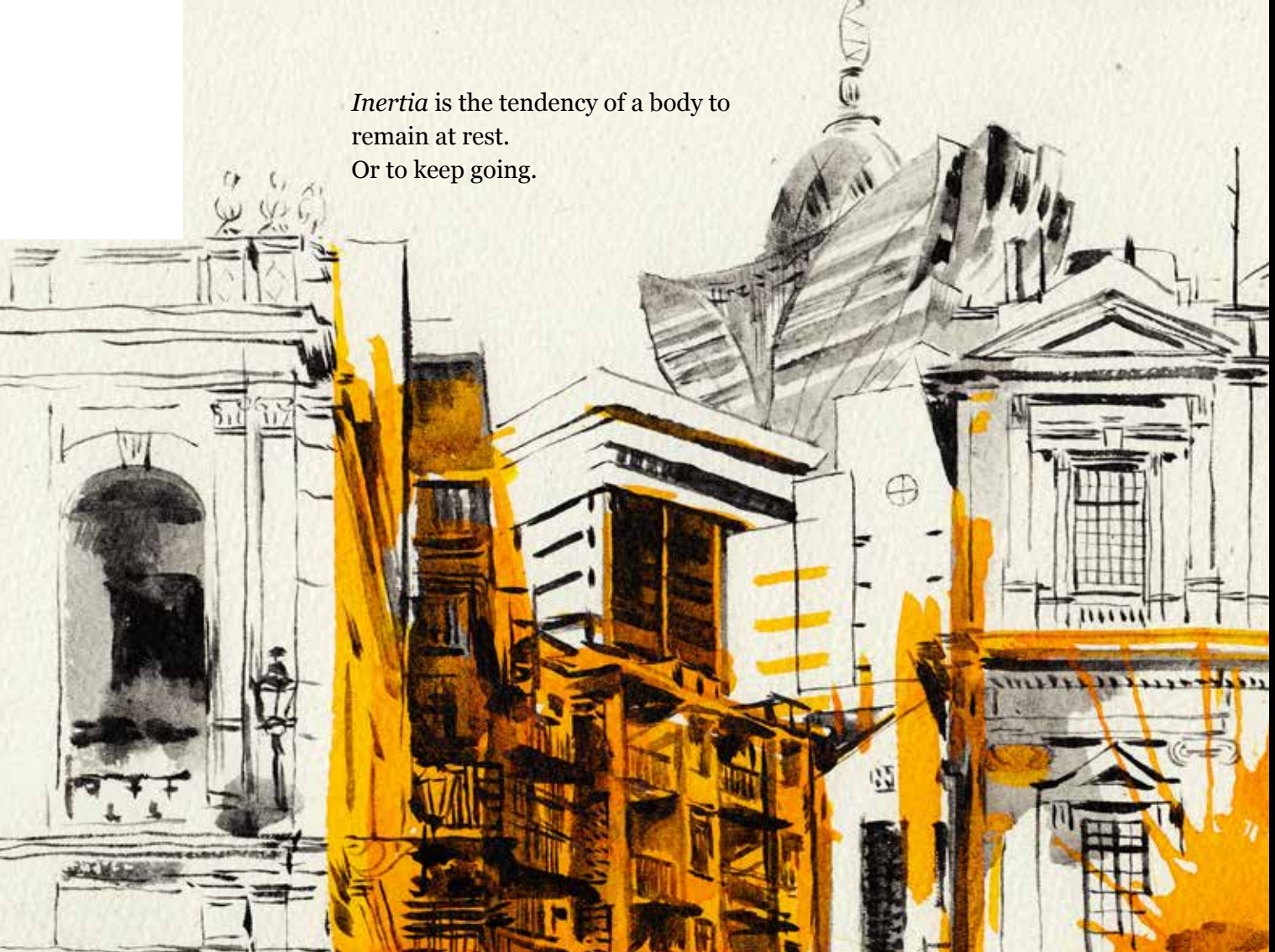
In the word "abysmo", it is the shape of the "y"
that gives it depth, darkness, mystery...To write it with a Latin
"i" is to shut the mouth of the abyss and transform it into a banal surface.
Teixeira de Pascoaes

Edition #21
Lisbon, May 2018
Text, illustrations, design and guest logo André Carrilho
Translated from Portuguese by Elsa Vieira
Typeset in Georgia on couché mate 100 g. Edition of 1000 units

abysmo
Rua da Horta Seca, 40, r/c 1200-221 Lisbon

***Thanks to** my father Júlio Carrilho, Fernanda, Taíla e Ntanzi, uncle Luís and Isabel, who sheltered me in Mozambique and Macau, to Luís Lázaro with whom I crossed paths in Thailand, to Rasquinho, to Bibito and Alexandra, who suggested places for me to draw in Macau, to Elga, who kept me company via Skype, to my mother Isabel and Teresa, who always kept things together in Portugal, to Ricardo Pinto and Matilde who introduced me to Theodore Mesquita and to Norman Tagore, to whom I also owe thanks for accommodation in Goa, to Rahul and his moped, to José Jaime, of Volta ao Mundo and Evasões magazines, who asked me to draw Macau and the Douro, to João Paulo Cotrim and everyone who made this book possible.*

Inertia is the tendency of a body to
remain at rest.
Or to keep going.



CONCLUSION

The Destination

[…] the dissemination of ideas across language boundaries necessarily requires translation.

Martin and Pickford, ***Travel Narratives in Translation, 1750-1830: Nationalism, Ideology, Gender***

In the introduction to this translation work-project, I revealed how this process began for me; how my shared journey with Carrilho began. Throughout, it has been a shared journey in that I needed to interview him several times on specific details, and was also dependent on him for the final version of the translation itself – the layout, design, etc.

My process during this work-project began with the translation itself. As my work was primarily the translation itself, and this text is not a dissertation, I did not read any supporting texts prior to finishing my translation, as I didn't want to translate from theory, but rather translate and observe my process, and only afterward realize and theorize my options. Obviously, the translation process was not entirely "innocent", since the knowledge I acquired during the curricular phase of the Master program gave me a feel for what translation problems might arise, allowing me to be a much more informed and prepared translator than in the past. I did not; however, only analyze and comment on my own translation process, but also on the book content itself, as it is a rich source of the various theoretical bases we discussed in the first chapter – globalization, post-colonialism and the "post" postmodern condition.

In addition to looking backwards and at the present, I am also here looking towards the possible future of the work going forward. As previously stated, though not thus far a popular academic discipline in American universities, Travel Writing is an ever-expanding genre for the current climate of travel abroad, and especially for Portuguese Travel Literature such as this text, given the current fascination with Portugal. Our intention is to publish this book in the USA. As stated in the introduction, Carrilho collaborates with *Vanity Fair* magazine in the US. He is therefore well-positioned to cross the bridge from illustrator to author of an illustrated literary travel book within the market.

My own personal aim here was to help divulge the infinitely rich Portuguese culture in such a way that an American reader will feel both at home because of the fluid and fluent American language and, also, somewhat like a traveler, experiencing the source culture's flavors and colors in a way that seems organic and enriching.

As for my own future process or work within the field of Translation Studies, a possible topic of study might be the interdisciplinariness of translation. The idea of an interdisciplinary study interests me due to its relationship to the idea of collaboration. As the founder and director of an international not for profit arts organization called *roguewaves* (roguewaves.net), my mission states that roguewaves, a natural phenomenon, are giant waves that occur when two or more smaller waves combine. This is the core idea of the project -— that two or more concepts, theories, individuals, etc., can become more powerful and effective when combined in the spirit of collaboration. Therefore, this topic of study – interdisciplinariness – makes sense as part of my larger body of work. As Cronin states: "[…] it is not just the translating subjects of the discipline that are engaged in a nomadic practice as they translate; rather the discipline itself is nomadic in its disciplinary journeying from subject area to subject area." (Cronin, 2000: 104)

And so, this part of my journey is concluded; hopefully opening doorways and tracing paths to future interludes on the roads of academia and life.

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ANNEX

INÉRCIA
André Carrilho

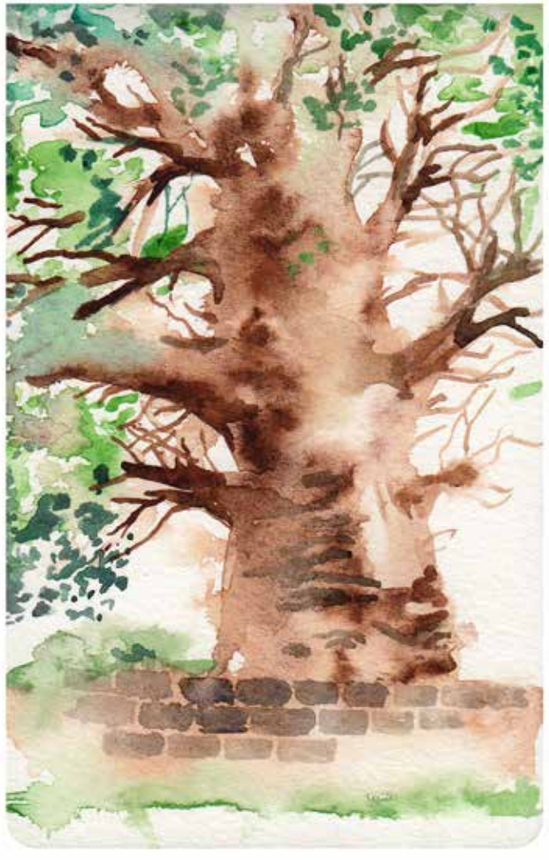
INÉRCIA

André Carrilho

Keep a diary, someday it may keep you

Mae West

André Carrilho foi ali ao Cabo das Tormentas, ver se encontrava Boa Esperança.



Embondeiro, Pemba, Moçambique 20 Jan 2012

Praia Wimbe, Pemba, Moçambique 21 Jan 2012

O alpendre da Sarah, Pemba, Moçambique 23 Jan 2012

Acordar em Maputo depois de uma noite no Gil Vicente a ouvir um guitarrista *black* a tocar *heavy metal*, um puto vocalista *soul* genial completamente bêbado, um baixista MC com a moca da sua vida e um baterista à séria, virtuoso. Nota mental, aqui será poiso regular. Fazer mala e de abalada para Joanesburgo, espera, e Hong Kong, transbordo para o *ferry*, e Macau, 20 e tal horas, um filme bom e dois maus depois da partida. Comparecer num jantar de cerimónia do Festival Literário de Macau, conversar com escritores portugueses de gabarito (nomes ocultados para manter a privacidade dos ditos) e seguir para concerto de fado. Sentir saudades da pátria mãe. Desvio de escritores portugueses para o Bellini no Venitian, que agora é o Playboy Club, e beber Carlsbergs servidas por meninas com orelhas de coelho e caudas de pompom ao som de Prince e do «I Will Survive», tocados por um grupo de cantores e músicos americanos importados, multifacetados no seu talento inconsequente.

Táxi para casa, a pensar que algo de fundamental mudou na sua percepção do mundo.

Deitado na areia, embalado pela leve maresia nocturna, os pirilampos são estrelas com propósitos obscuros.

A DEZ METROS DE PROFUNDIDADE O CHÃO DE CORAL ACABA, DESCENDO abruptamente. Em frente, uma enorme parede de olhos atentos e reflexos prateados espera, ao desafio. Avançamos e a parede desloca-se à nossa volta, granular, transformando-se numa perfeita cúpula, rodeando-nos, mantendo uma distância de segurança. Usando o fluxo de ar nos pulmões, controlamos a flutuação, de modo a mantermo-nos estacionários. Ali ficamos, num diálogo mudo de instintos, no centro de uma bolha gigante de seres vivos. Biologia, ciência, investigação, desporto radical... Tudo bem. Mas arquitectos, poetas e filósofos também aqui deviam estar.

Praia de Haad Salad, Koh Phangan, Tailândia 08 Mar 2012

Improvisa-se. A caminho do aeroporto a estrada é flanqueada por bairros de lata. As fachadas, de cores primárias, garridas, passam aceleradas, e pelo canto do olho distinguem-se *slogans* e substantivos familiares. Percebe-se: marcas de detergentes e operadoras de telecomunicações pagam aos moradores que tenham a sorte de habitar uma parede virada para a estrada, e pintam-na com logótipos e publicidades. O resultado é africano, mas a matéria-prima gráfica é ocidental, doutro hemisfério económico.

"Vês? Foi aqui." O meu pai tira a mão do volante e aponta uma mancha de asfalto mais escura no meio da estrada, antes de passar por cima dela sem abrandar. Lembro-me do que me contou ontem ao almoço.

O ano passado uns aumentaram o preço do pão e outros, mais numerosos, foram para a rua. Barricaram ruas, incendiaram pneus. "Mas pneus ardem?" "Claro, são feitos de combustível; pegas fogo e ficam ali a arder." (Um dos problemas de crescer numa sociedade de consumo tecnológica é o constante desconhecimento do que realmente são as coisas feitas. Adiante.) Os poderes que podiam retaliaram com o que tinham, e o que estava à mão era gás lacrimogéneo, arma de dispersão cujos danos podem ser minimizados lavando a cara com água. Durante alguns dias, porém, ninguém arredou pé e surgiu um novo comércio. Começaram a ver-se pessoas com alguidares de água à beira da estrada. Por cinco paus podia-se lavar a cara, limpar as lágrimas do gás e voltar à insurreição.

Já no aeroporto decidimos embrulhar a mala em celofane protector, para prevenir roubos, antes de a despachar no *check-in*. No final o funcionário coloca uma fita de cor vermelho vivo, sem função aparente. Claro, tem o logótipo da maior operadora de telecomunicações do país.

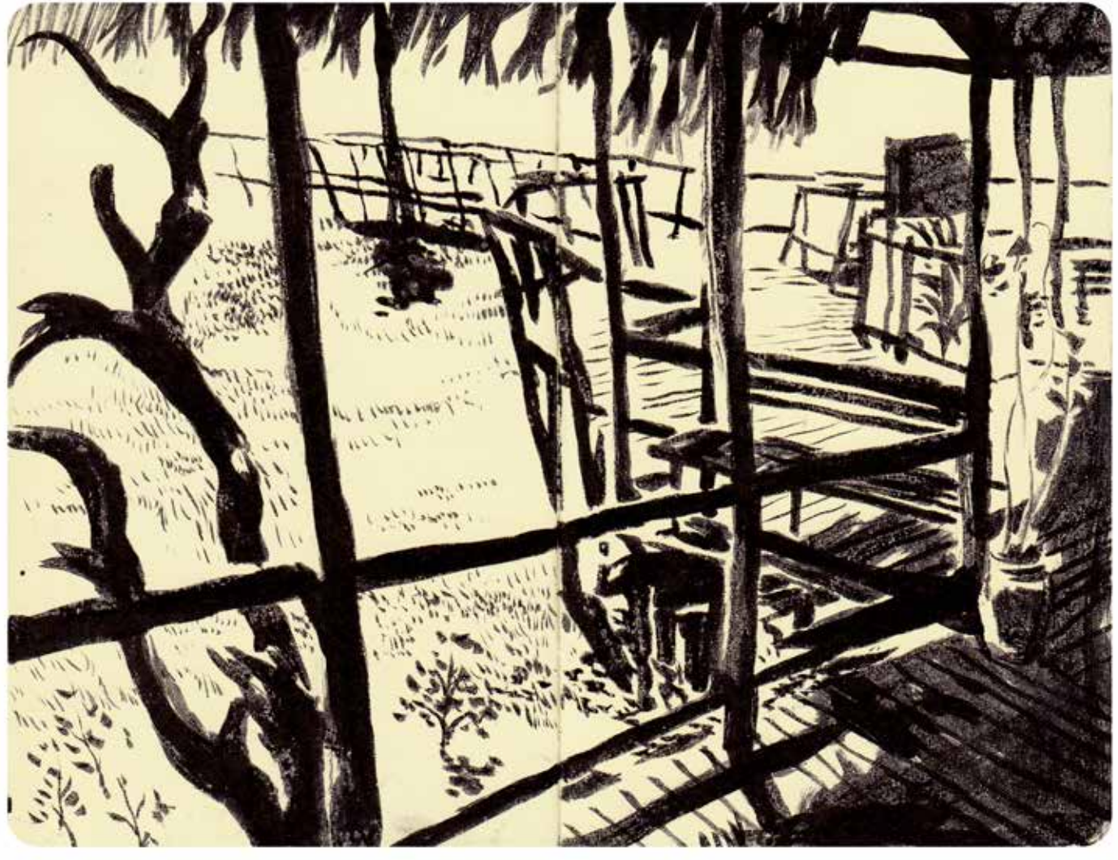
Em Moçambique até a paz de espírito é patrocinada.

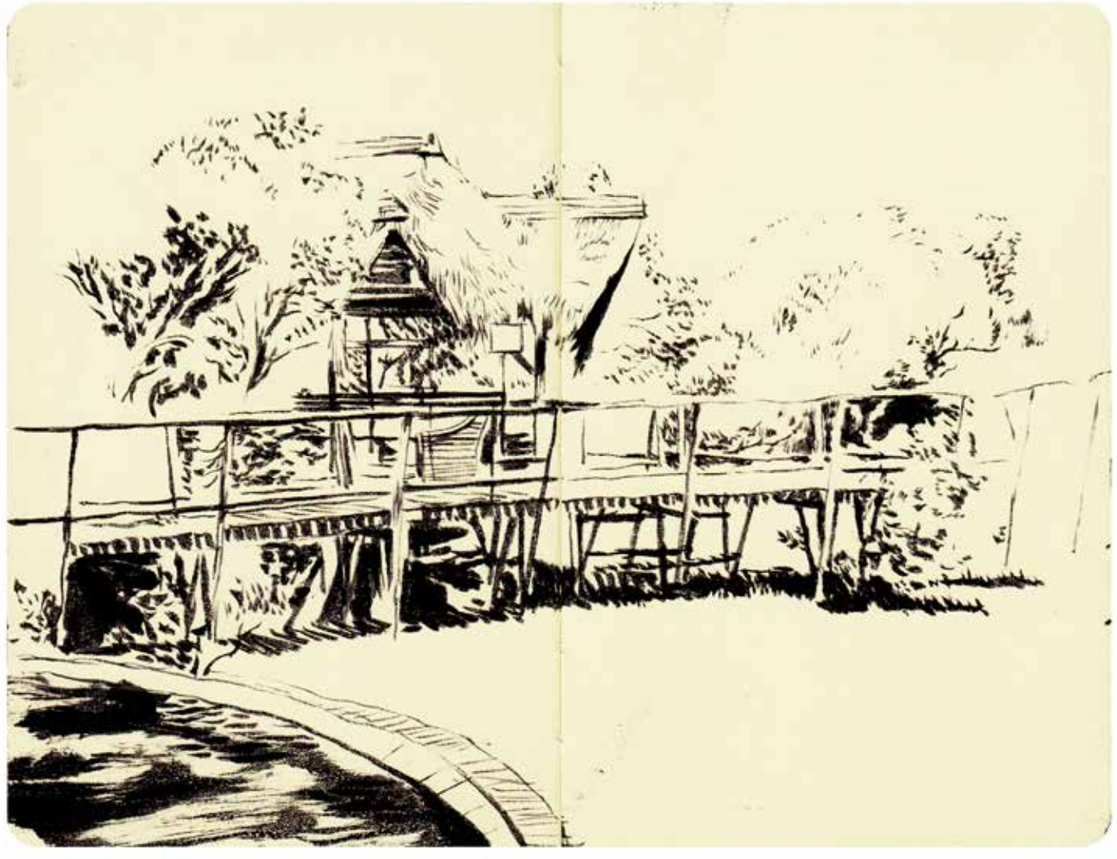
Desta vez foi diferente. A praia a perder de vista, escaldada pelo sol, e o mar, ondulado, robusto. À nossa espera, longe, à beira de água, está uma lancha insuflável, de dois motores. Somos duas guias, um grupo de dois homens e uma mulher, e eu.

A guia de mergulho mais experiente, flanqueada pela sua colega, ambas louras e com sotaque sul-africano, jovens, explicam em inglês alguns procedimentos e o percurso que vamos fazer. Pegando num livro amarrotado, com imagens de vida marinha, uma delas aponta os retratos dos seres que poderemos encontrar. "Estes quatro aqui convém não tocar em qualquer circunstância, são venenosos." Isto interessa-me. "E o que acontece se formos picados?" "Bom este aqui" – e aponta para o mais feio, nem parece um peixe, é mais um pedregulho – "se te picar morres em sete segundos." A outra também sabe umas coisas. Mostra um peixe que se apresenta sem rodeios, tem espinhos vermelhos e brancos. "Com este talvez sobrevivas, mas é muito pouco provável. Morres num dia ou dois." Rimo-nos. Pergunto-me qual será a maneira mais estúpida de morrer, picado por um animal subaquático no Oceano Índico ou dentro de um carro, na A1, direcção Lisboa-Porto. E qual será estatisticamente mais provável. A A1, claro. Definitivamente é a mais estúpida.

A mulher do grupo de três faz a pergunta óbvia: "não podemos antes ir ver uns tubarões?"

Debaixo de água seguimos a líder, que leva consigo o cabo da bóia de sinalização. A outra vem atrás de nós, vigilante. Tento tirar umas fotos, mas é difícil. Ainda não estou automatizado; muita coisa em que pensar e a que estar atento. Equalizar os ouvidos, regular o ar nos pulmões para manter o nível de flutuação, não subir demasiado, não tocar em nada, respirar regularmente, ignorar uma leve cãibra, não perder o grupo de vista, lidar com a água que entra na máscara, olha aquele peixe, espera aí que isto agora sobe, deixa cá ver quanto resta de ar... Concentro-me num pequeno grupo de peixes que parece indeciso, anda lateralmente de um lado para o outro. A guia tinha avisado, neste local a água imprime a tudo o movimento pendular das ondas. E eu, desconfiado, andava a tentar fixar a minha posição em relação ao solo, despendendo energia e precioso oxigénio. Os peixes, mais sábios, deixam-se ir, para lá, para cá, para lá, para cá. Têm razão; relaxo e junto-me à valsa. Tal como a pintar uma aguarela, é melhor deixar a água fazer o que quer. Posso nunca vir a ser peixe, mas vou tentar aprender a ser tinta.





Tinha de ser, é sempre assim, que raiva. Ando numa ânsia de registos, fotografias, desenhos, vídeos, textos. Para esta loucura arranjei um método, uma lógica, que seria aborrecido explicar. Basta saber que o resultado prático é filmar todas as descolagens e todas as aterragens dos aviões que apanho. Encosto o telefone à janela e gravo. Lanço a rede a ver se apanho algo de interessante. E há dias fugiu-me um peixe graúdo, assim, deste tamanho!

Seria mais um cardume. Enorme, de pessoas. Aterrámos em Inhambane, após escala em Vilanculos, sem acidente de percurso a assinalar. Na pista, a caminho do lugar de estacionamento, decido parar de filmar. Paisagem igual a tantas outras, alcatrão da pista, relva da praxe, asa do avião que já tinha filmado toda a viagem para me abstrair do estado da mesma, enfim. Guardo o telefone e começamos a dar uma curva, apertada, súbita. E a janela, ao virar com o avião, revela de repente o terminal de destino. À frente do edifício está o que parece ser a cidade em peso. Uma muralha compacta de pessoas na fronteira do asfalto, uns a cantar, outros a dançar, aqui um grupo vestido de branco, ali um outro de vermelho, todos a olhar para nós, bandas, escolas, gentes. Uma recepção digna de alta patente.

O avião é pequeno, a hélices, não tem classes. Para quem será este estendal? Levanta-se o homem do primeiro lugar, dois à minha frente. Está de fato e gravata, anacrónico, devia ter desconfiado. A porta do avião abre e deixa entrar calor, música e gritos. O homem sai e nenhum outro passageiro se mexe. Eu não quero ir a seguir, tenho horror às luzes da ribalta. Mas lá terá de ser, a maior parte das pessoas não sairá do avião, que segue de volta para Maputo. Esta escala é de poucos minutos.

Desço com mais duas mulheres as escadas do avião e a multidão olha, mais silenciosa. Há uma fronteira que as pessoas que nos recebem em bloco não se atrevem a transpor, o limite do alcatrão da pista. Enquanto o pisar estarei na mira dos seus olhares, debaixo do foco da sua atenção. O branco dos seus olhos segue-me, dissecante.

Não sei o que pensou o dignitário que vinham esperar, mas eu percebi. Em Inhambane como em tantos outros lugares, para se chegar e pertencer à paisagem tem de se sair quanto antes do alcatrão, e pisar a terra batida.

Havia aquele filme do Bertolucci, *Um Chá no Deserto*, base-ado no livro do Paul Bowles. John Malkovich, Debra Winger. Há uma altura em que um deles fala da diferença entre o turista e o viajante. "Um turista sabe quando volta para casa, o viajante não." Ou algo do género. Luto com esses dois rótulos e tento encaixar-me num deles. Por mais que os estique, não dá. Ambos têm algo que eu não tenho: disponibilidade para o que encontram no caminho. A minha é limitada, continuo a trabalhar, muitas vezes não tenho tempo para olhar a paisagem. Trato os sítios por onde passo como se fossem a minha casa, sem obrigações de visitar o monumento mais próximo. Sem olhar para um calendário ou para um guia de viagem.

Quando muito serei um nómada. Esse não faz turismo nem viaja. A sua casa está espraiada, estica-se por alguns sítios familiares. E volta a eles regularmente, ao sabor dos elementos. (Nota para *cartoon*: um nómada a fazer turismo. Deve haver uma piada aí algures.)

No lufa-lufa da passagem, muitas vezes não reparo em coisas em que devia. O desenho ajuda-me a parar e a observar, dá-me tempo com a envolvente. Tem laivos de meditação. Costumava achar que ou se vivia ou se registava o que se vive, que parar para desenhar ou tirar uma fotografia cortava o fio a qualquer experiência. Agora é diferente. Ao desenhar, olho com um pouco

mais de profundidade. Paro tudo, sento-me com o que me rodeia e registo. Não penso em mais nada. Asseguro-me de que no papel fica uma memória, mais perene do que outras.

Tenho de pagar a conta e fico a sós com o encarregado da recepção, ambos momentaneamente reféns do meu cartão, da rede, da tecnologia. Preciso de uma caneta para assinar o talão. Ele quebra o silêncio "É português?" A pergunta espanta-me sempre, pensei que era óbvio. "Sou." "Posso fazer-lhe uma pergunta?" Há alguma timidez nas suas maneiras, como se fosse revelar algo íntimo. "Diz-se 'posso pedir uma caneta emprestada?' ou 'posso pedir uma caneta emprestado?'" Pois é, esqueço-me sempre de que isto da comunidade de países de língua portuguesa é uma construção que necessita a sua manutenção. Nesta zona de Moçambique o português é segunda língua. A primeira é a língua indígena, que varia com os territórios de cada povo, indiferentes às fronteiras rabiscadas por brancos. Os que trabalham na hotelaria têm de aprender a fala dos visitantes, sejam ou não compatriotas.

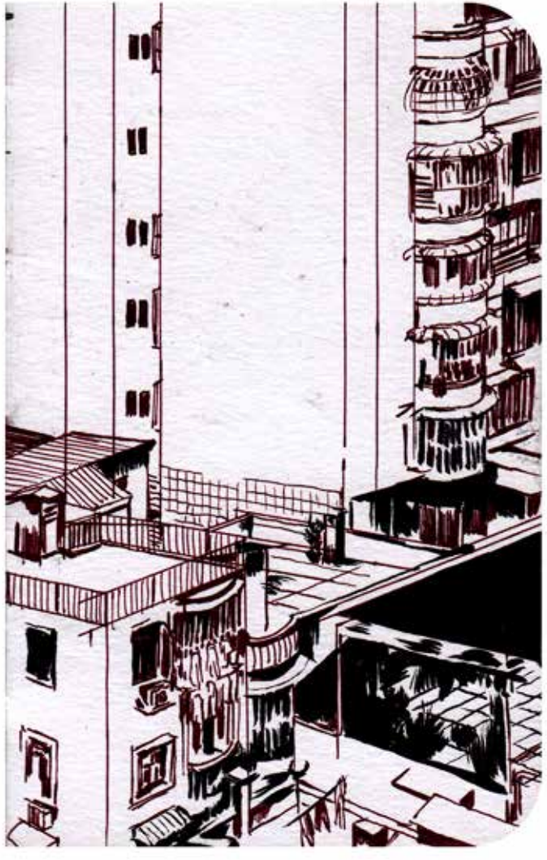
No transporte para o aeroporto o condutor mete conversa. Deve ser um daqueles dias. Pergunta-me se gostei do Flamingo e se foi a primeira vez. Digo que muito e que sim e acrescento que não será a última. "Sabe, agora a maré não estava muito alta, aí ainda é mais bonito." Fico baralhado. "Mas não estava alta hoje de manhã?" "Sim, mas a semana passada estava mais alta, e esta semana ficou mais baixa. O que quer dizer que para a semana vai subir outra vez, até ficar mais alta. Vai mudando." Pergunto-me se terá a ver com o ciclo lunar, nunca tinha pensado nisso.

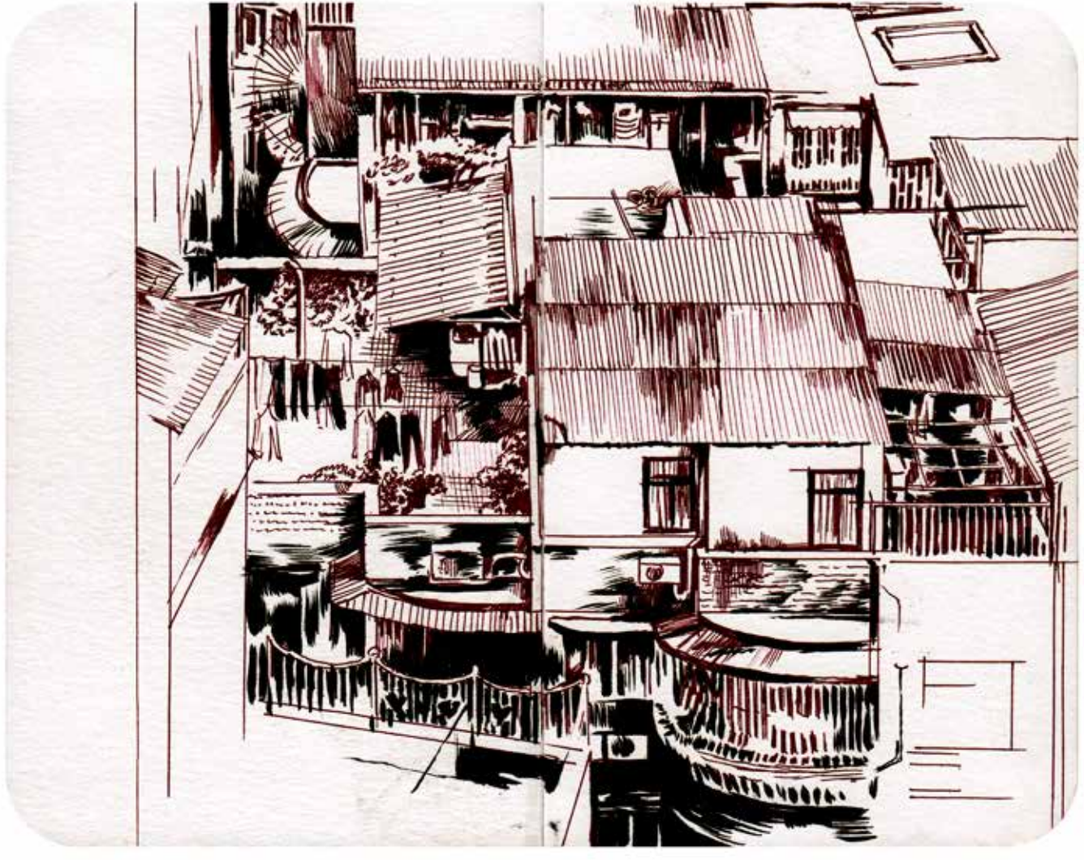
Ele também desconfia de que tem alguma coisa a ver com a Lua, afinal estamos a falar de marés. "Quando é assim, a água fica cá em cima, muito perto do chão, quarenta centímetros, e fica tudo ainda mais bonito." Deve ser verdade, consigo imaginar os passadiços e os alpendres, abrindo caminho ao nível do mar, produzindo uma leve ilusão de óptica.

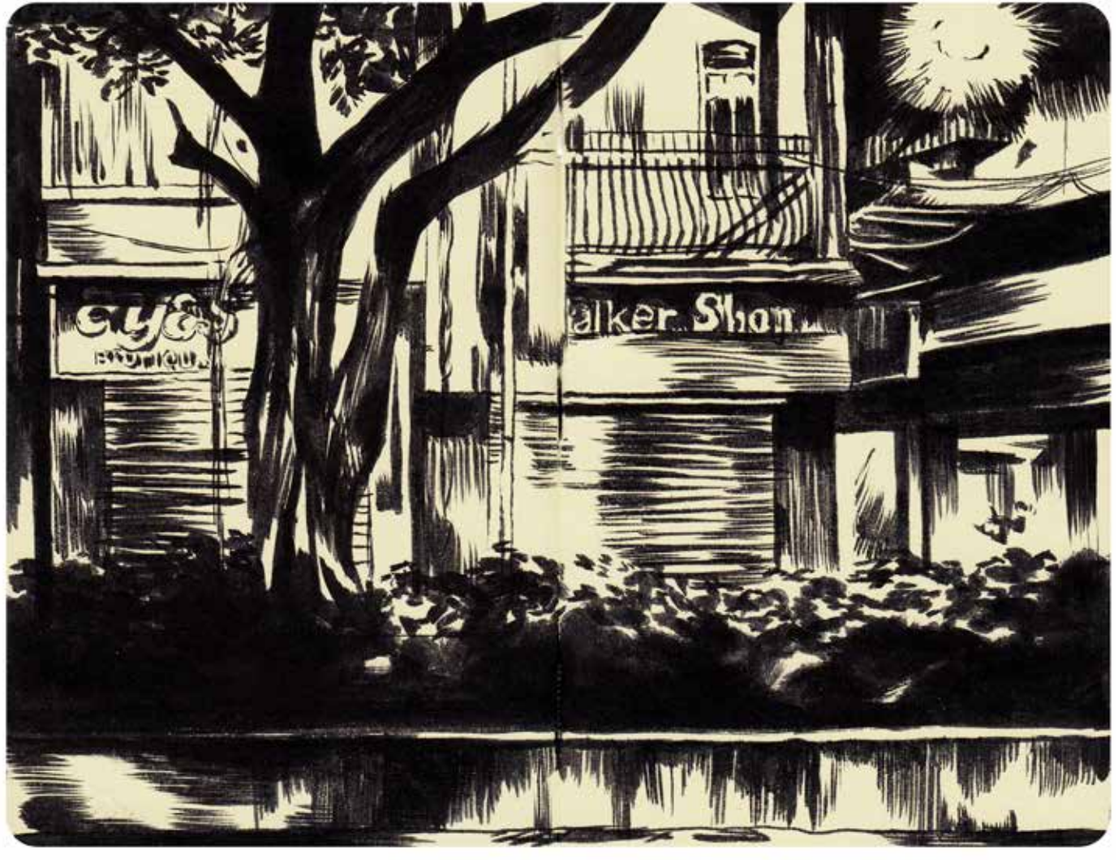
Agora terei mesmo de voltar. Chamem-me petulante, mas já me imagino a andar sobre a água.

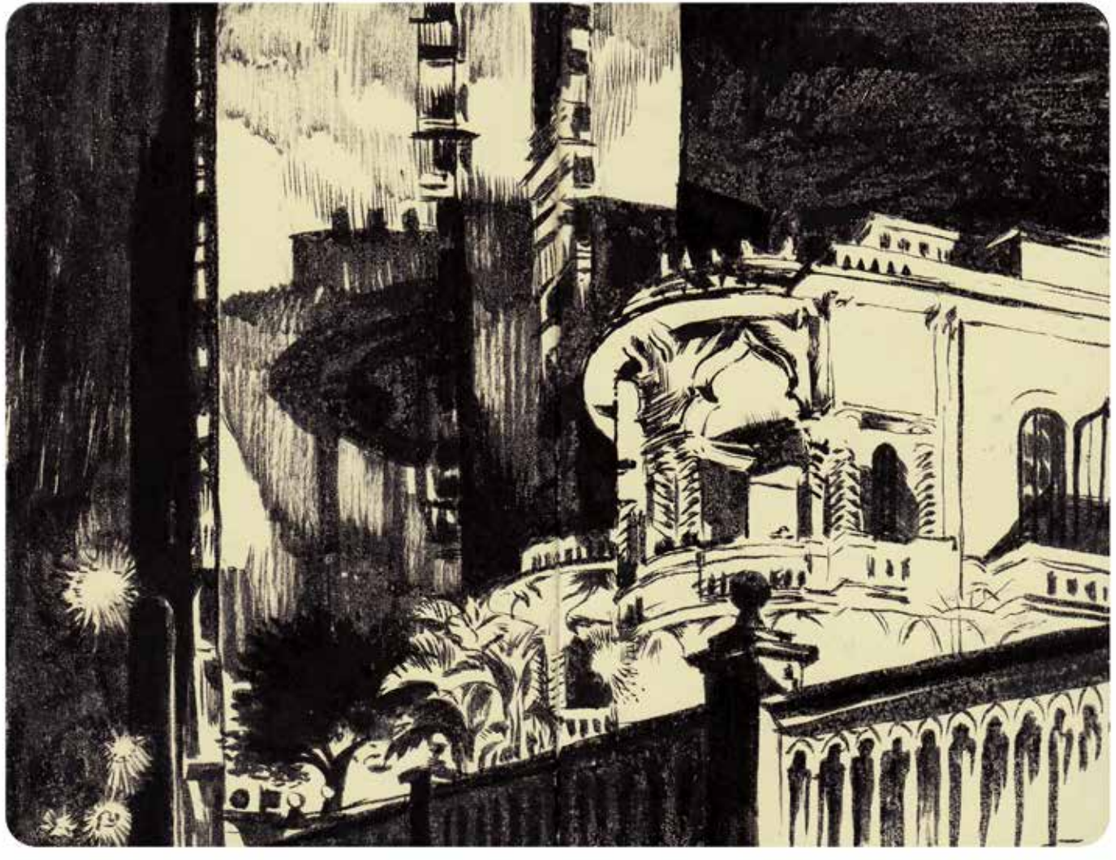
De volta a Maputo, descubro que a força da gravidade da Lua se combina periodicamente com a do Sol para criar marés mais altas. Mas as minhas investigações em rede são interrompidas. Parece que uns colegas de faculdade do meu pai me querem conhecer. Jantarada, assim de rompante, tem de ser. À mesa, atulhada de iguarias e de professores de arquitectura, a língua portuguesa encontra os seus principais representantes. Um professor do Brasil, uma angolana, dois moçambicanos, três portugueses. O anfitrião, branco mas autóctone, começa a explicar o que são machimbombos. "São chapas, era o nome que se lhes dava antigamente." Chapas são carrinhas que servem de autocarro, mas mais pequenas, normalmente atulhadas de gente. O meu pai lembra-se de outra. "Nunca percebi porque é que a dada altura se chamaram semicolectivos. O que é isso de semicolectivo? Ou é colectivo ou não é!" As suas indignações são sempre temperadas pela musicalidade que a língua adquiriu neste país. O espanto acrescenta umas notas que nós em Portugal não usamos. Mas o dono da casa não concluiu a aula. "Agora, machimbombos vem de machimba!..." O meu pai lança as mãos à cabeça. Eles adoram-se, são muitos amigos. Como uma dupla de *vaudeville* bem ensaiada, cada um tem o seu papel. O do meu pai é sério, mas isso não significa que não saiba onde a conversa terá de ir. Tem é de parecer que vai contrariado, faz parte do seu *show*.

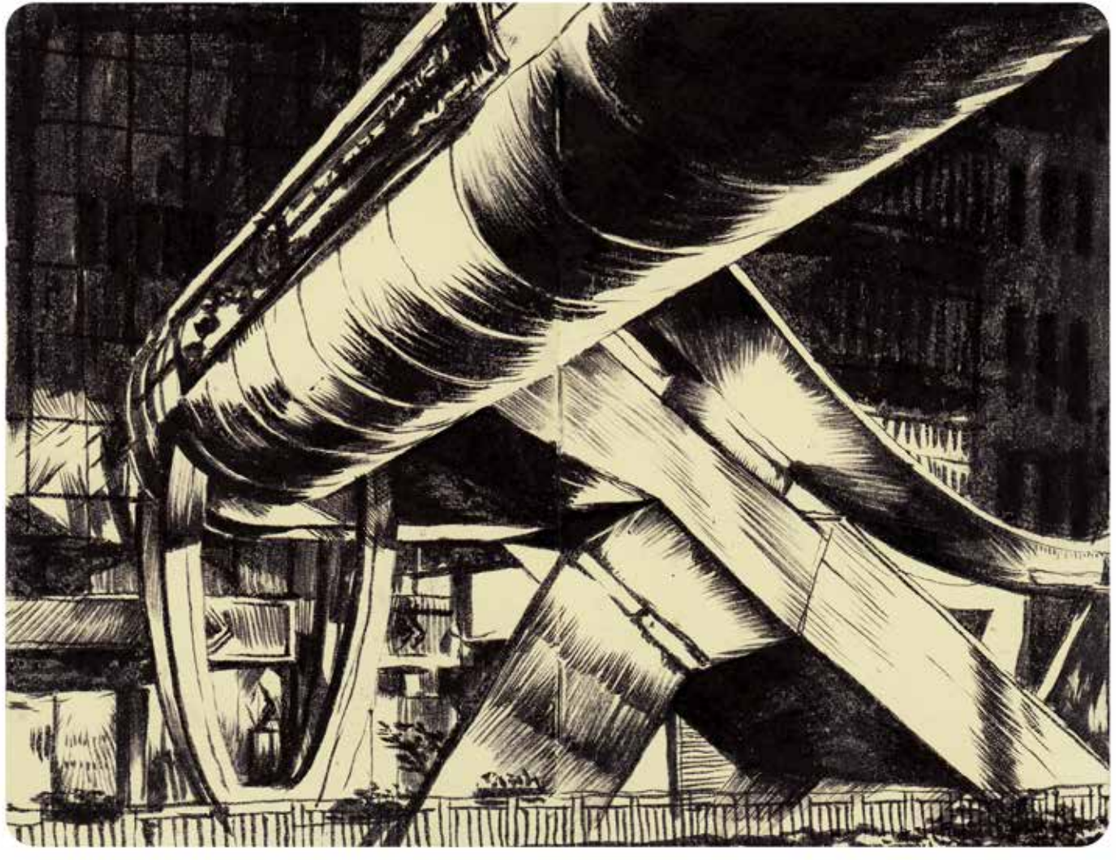
O significado de machimba subentende-se, principalmente porque não é logo verbalizado, por estarmos à mesa. Mas o brasileiro não percebeu e a angolana lá lhe atira a solução, meio por baixo da mesa. "É cocó." O brasileiro está baralhado. "Como, cocó? É galinha?" A mesa explode, talheres e louças tilintam de riso. Sirvo-me de mais BSE e vou em seu auxílio. "Não, é cocó! Há o chichi e há o cocó. Como é no Brasil?" Os seus olhos abrem-se num misto de excitação e reconhecimento. Mas que espanto. "O que nós temos é cocô!!! Cocó é o que a galinha fala!" Digo-lhe que outro dia comi um belo frango de coco. Ele não cabe em si de contente. "Vivi anos em Portugal e só agora aprendi uma nova palavra. Cocó!" A noite está ganha. Torna-se evidente na sua alegria: sem cocó a vida seria uma merda.





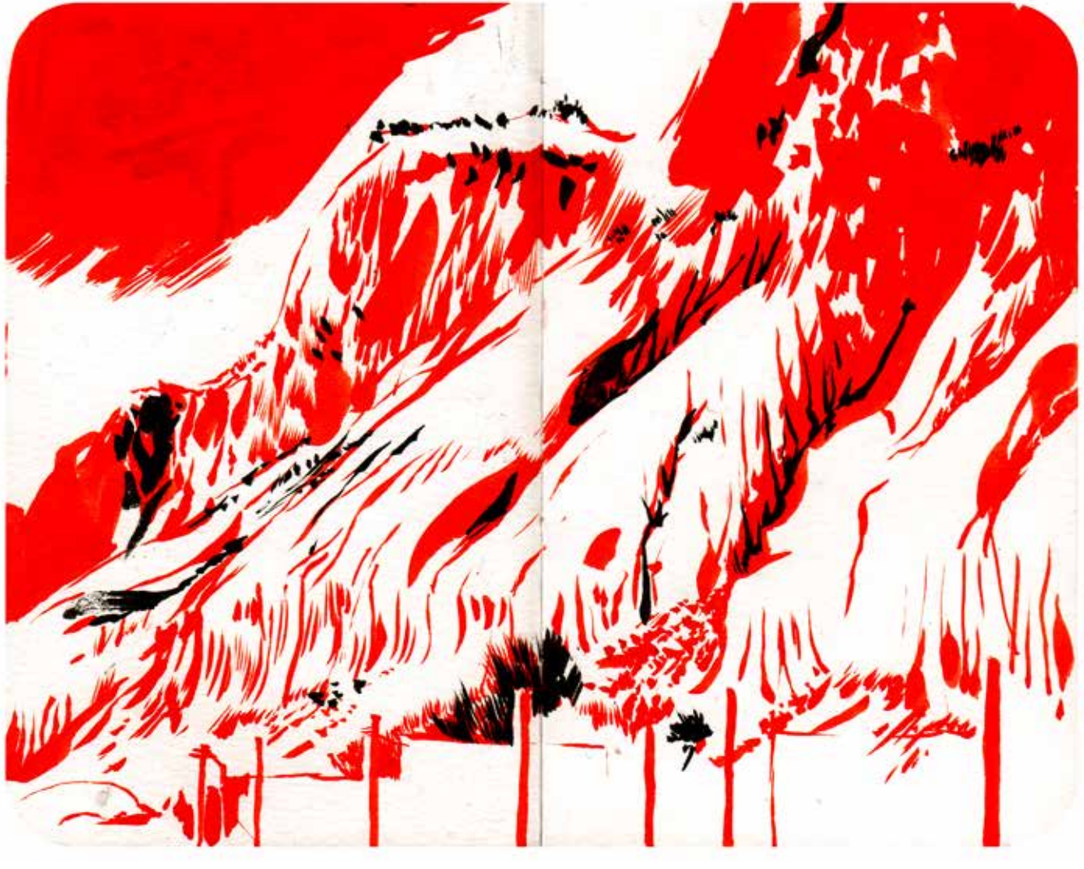




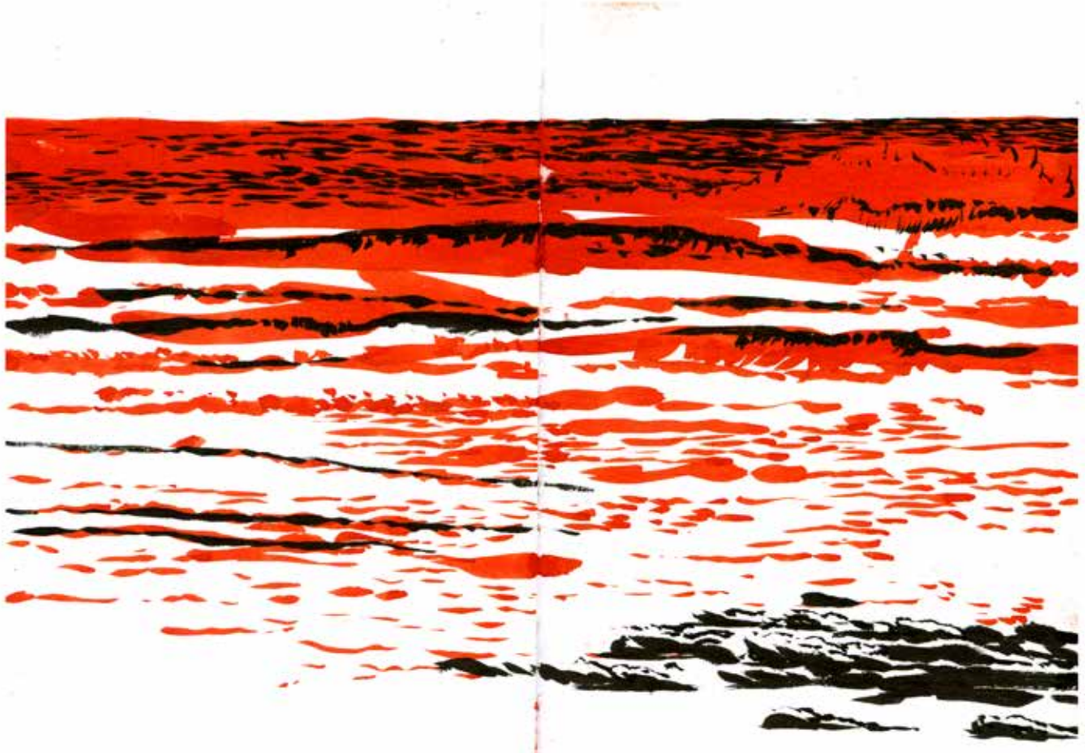


Ponte Governador Nobre de Carvalho, Macau, China 02 Mai 2012

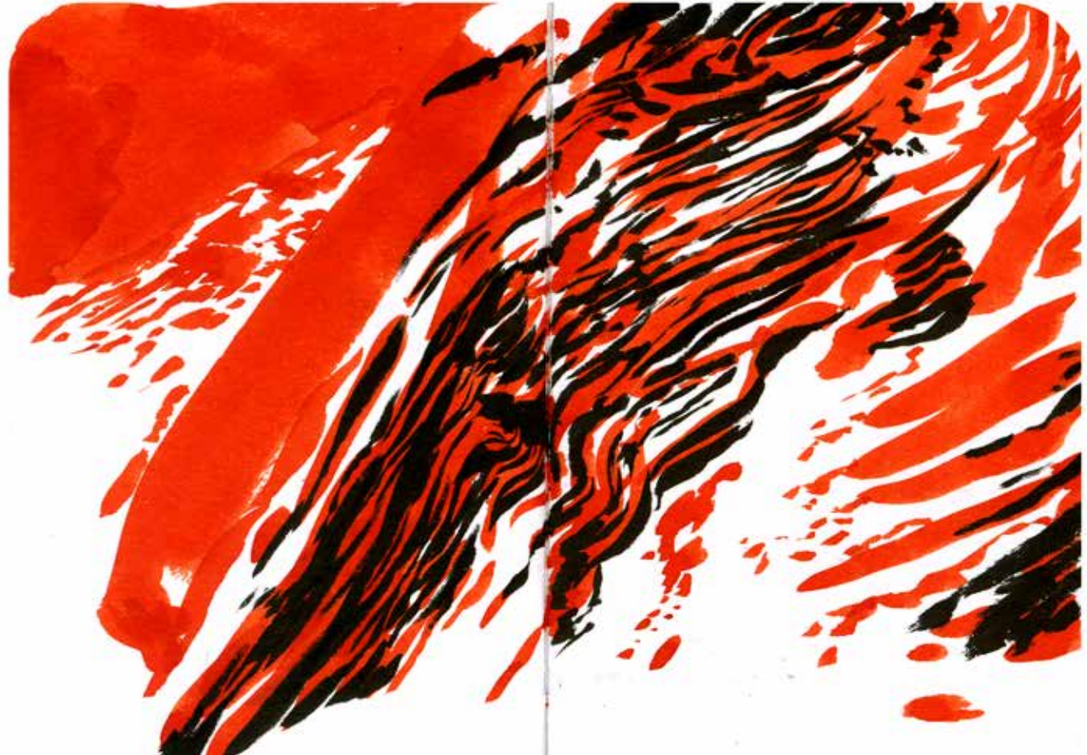
Praia da Falésia, Portugal 14 Mai 2012



Praia de Vale Figueiras, Alentejo, Portugal 16 Mai 2012



Praia de Vale Figueiras, Alentejo, Portugal 16 Mai 2012



Padrões de compressão, Praia de Vale Figueiras, Alentejo, Portugal 16 Mai 2012

Rua Coronel Mesquita, Macau, China 27 Jun 2012

No táxi, depois de lhe dizer a morada em cantonês, o taxista começa:

– *What's the block sir*?

Fico surpreendido por me falar em inglês, coisa rara neste canto do mundo. Hesito mas mantenho-me fiel à cartilha local.

– *Sap sam.*

O condutor então diz-me algo em cantonês, que obviamente não percebo. Ele está baralhado.

– *Oh, I thought you could speak cantonese!*

– *I'm sorry, I only know the numbers. And my address. And "momantai."*

Rimo-nos. Ele continua, animado.

– *You know? Cantonese is very difficult. It took me some time to learn. Mandarin is a little easier, but cantonese is hard.*

Intrigado, começo a pensar que este taxista é de Pequim, ou de uma zona mais a norte do país.

– *So you're not from Canton?*

– *I'm from Indonesia, had to learn this language. 30 years ago... Where are you from?*

– *Portugal.*

– Português? Eu falo português!

– *Really? So you know all the relevant languages here.*

Como se saber português servisse de alguma coisa nesta terra. Mas é fácil sentirmo-nos lisonjeados pelo interesse de outros povos no que é nosso. Continuo a espantar-me com os nomes das ruas em português, com os uniformes que ainda têm escrito "Polícia" em letras reflectoras. Comentava outro dia com alguém que me escapava a lógica desta aparente tolerância chinesa. De que lhes servia o português no território? Explicaram-me que talvez fosse uma maneira de tornar Macau distinto, pitoresco, diferente da China pura e dura. É no fundo uma maneira de ter algo de fora cá dentro, e foi sempre para isso que Macau serviu. É um Portugal dos pequeninos, idealizado muito antes da Veneza transplantada do Casino Venetian, que a tantos parece *kitsch*. Ocorre-me agora que a pulsão foi sempre a mesma. O Império do Meio contém curiosidade aos milhões.

Continuo a falar com o taxista em inglês porque o sotaque cerrado do seu português não me inspira muita confiança. É melhor jogar pelo seguro. Ele continua.

– Português é mais fácil, cantonês é muito difícil.

Desisto, passemos a português então.

– E indonésio, é fácil ou difícil?

– É como o português, é fácil.

– Ai é? Como assim?

– É fácil! Vocês dizem “sapato”, nós dizemos *“sepatu.”* “Manteiga” nós dizemos *“mentega.”* Por isso português é fácil para nós... Aqui estamos, *sap sam*, número treze...

Vou ter de investigar esta mais a fundo. Já ouvi dizer que o japonês contém várias palavras de origem portuguesa, mas não sabia que na Indonésia também havia sinais de contágio quinhentista. Andámos a semear mais latim do que pensava, com a ajuda de crucifixos e quinquilharias. E alguma pólvora para apimentar a coisa.

– E como se diz “obrigado”?

– *Terima kasih!*

– *Terima kasih.*

– *Thank you, sir!*

Insisti com a moça, mas nada feito. Dois voos separados com escala no Dubai, sete horas cada um, lugares à janela todos ocupados. Às vezes consigo um lugar ao pé da saída de emergência, mais espaçoso, mas nem isso. A senhora parecia genuinamente preocupada com o meu bem-estar, até um pouco de mais. Desculpava-se que o voo estava cheio, tentava, falava ao telefone com alguém que parecia ter poder para mexer as peças do tabuleiro com mais liberdade, com regras próprias. Mas não, nada feito. A Emirates abrira recentemente uma rota pelo Dubai, que passava a fazer de placa giratória mais em conta, para quem como eu gosta de fazer piscinas entre hemisférios. Os meridianos como barreiras de uma corrida de obstáculos. Talvez tenham sido demasiado ambiciosos, ou imprudentes. Numa era de *sites online,* com comparação de preços automática é de esperar que voos para o outro lado do mundo com preços abaixo do normal atraiam atenção instantânea. Resultado: toda a gente gosta de uma boa pechincha, de preferência à janela. "Acho que nem lhe consigo corredor." Essa do corredor... Nunca percebi porque gostam certas pessoas do corredor. A janela é que é, com a alucinação da paisagem que se inclina e muda de escala a bel-prazer do piloto, com a hipótese de nos encostarmos e dormirmos descansados. Um dia explicaram-me que quem gosta do corredor quer ir à casa de banho mais facilmente, coisa de mulheres. Nunca me tinha ocorrido. Foi como quando uma amiga me explicou que há mulheres que se sentam na praia à beirinha do mar porque se querem aliviar sem ninguém dar por isso. E eu que pensava que o sexo feminino era mais dado à contemplação bucólica...

Não faz mal, mentalizo-me de que terei de passar umas horas a tentar dormir sem tocar nos dois estranhos que me servirão de moldura. Fica o esforço da moça do *check-in*.

Dentro do avião, dirijo-me ao lugar atribuído, 10F. Mas algo não bate certo. Em vez da habitual cadeira entalada no meio de tantas outras, deparo-me com uma poltrona saída da sala de diagnóstico de um psicólogo futurista, com tanto espaço à volta que me imagino a fazer uma dança tribal em seu redor. Faço notar à hospedeira que não pedi e, principalmente, não paguei por aquilo, ao que ela me responde que o voo está demasiado cheio e que tiveram de distribuir os lugares de classe executiva a algumas pessoas da económica. Só lentamente me ocorre que a primeira moça, a do *check-in*, é que é responsável por esta providência. Traquinas, preparou-me uma surpresa nas minhas barbas. Gentileza e generosidade, pelos vistos ainda há disso.

A criança encurralada em mim senta-se e inspecciona o seu novo brinquedo. É um casulo de compartimentos, botões, opções. Quando era puto gostava dos Transformers, e esta cadeira pode ser uma cama. Estico os pés e não consigo tocar na poltrona em frente. Experimento todos os botões e o painel controlador *touchscreen* portátil do lado esquerdo, e coisas começam a mexer, uma divisória sobe, incontrolável, o ecrã gigante lá longe, nas costas da cadeira da frente, ilumina-se

e informa-me de que tenho montes de sorte, há uma data de coisas que posso ver, tocar, sentir, viver. Vai ser uma viagem cheia de emoção. Está ali escrito, deve ser verdade.

Sinto-me mal pela divisória que subiu entre mim e quem está ao meu lado esquerdo. Não quero que pensem que sou anti-social; é bom manter regras de boa vizinhança entre casulos. Digo casulo mas a palavra que salta mais facilmente é *pod*, que em inglês também significa vagem. É para isto que nos serve a tecnologia hoje em dia, para sermos mais fechados nos nossos confortos. E para nos ocorrerem nomes em inglês. Continuarmos entretidos, termos o nosso mundo confinado e uma data de ferramentas sociais para o partilharmos virtualmente. Mas continuamos iguais àqueles velhinhos que observam a rua à janela, todo o dia. As nossas janelas são mais sofisticadas, mas mais difíceis de fechar. Mantêm-nos dentro de casa. Esquecemo-nos de que do casulo e da vagem é suposto emergir algo de novo, um passo numa transição que permita outros voos. Veremos no que nos tornaremos daqui a uns anos, se em traças, em borboletas ou em *drones*.

Do outro lado da minha divisória rebelde, que se recusa a voltar à posição inicial, está uma freira. Lembro-me dela na fila do *check-in*. Parece noviça, vestida dos pés à cabeça de branco, jovem, mínima. Tem traços orientais, mas pele escura; talvez seja da Indonésia ou da Malásia. Está acompanhada por uma mulher mais velha, menos caracterizada com o hábito, cabeça descoberta, grisalha, portuguesa. Lembro-me de ter reparado em como são diferentes das freiras giraças das fantasias de Hollywood. Nos filmes, as mulheres do clero estão sempre a um passo de serem convertidas para o lado do pecado por um de nós, homens viris e irresistíveis. Mas estas parecem ter feito a sua escolha. Os braços são magros, rijos, de tarefas diárias, de trabalho. Os seus corpos tensos e secos tentam não ser femininos e quase o conseguem, envergonhados por detrás dos hábitos. Outros casulos. Estes sabem por que esperam.

Estranhas, as freiras. Nos EUA rebelaram-se contra a hierarquia papal. Atreveram-se a dizer que Cristo prega a tolerância e a compaixão, mesmo para com as minorias, para com os mais desafortunados e, sim, para com as mulheres. Ideias perigosas para o poder central masculino da Igreja Católica. Homens que não percebem que uma freira pode tentar deixar de ser mulher, mas mais dificilmente deixará de ser mãe.

Experimento todos os botões e consigo encontrar um equilíbrio de controlo do meu casulo / poltrona. *Podtrona*. É impossível estar mesmo confortável, com a antecipação da próxima necessidade e respectiva solução instantânea. Mas é muito melhor do que viajar em económica, claro. E as minhas vizinhas? O ecrã da noviça permanece desligado, tudo parece tranquilo, talvez durma. Espreito por cima da divisória e percebo. Está a ler um livro, tranquilamente. Naquele momento voa mais alto do que eu.

O AVIÃO COMEÇA A DESCER, COMO SE POUSASSE NUMA CAMA ESPECTRAL de arranha-céus. A estrutura urbana é subentendida pelas constelações de janelas iluminadas sobre elegantes silhuetas negras geométricas, contrastantes com as nuvens baixas, que reflectem as luzes nocturnas da metrópole. A noite em Hong Kong tem uma paisagem invertida, com o céu carregado, relevos de vapor solidificado pela luz indirecta da cidade, pairando por cima do cintilar de milhões de lares que ainda não se deitaram. E talvez nunca se deitem.

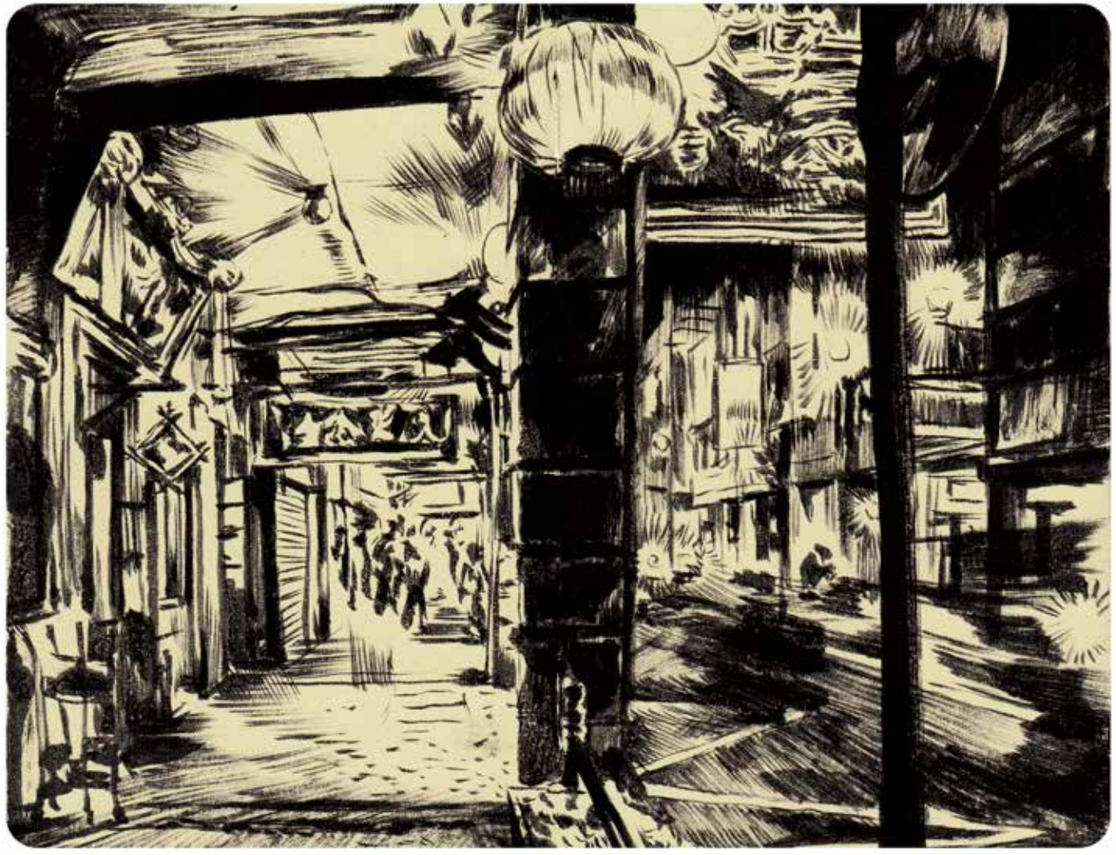
A minha primeira viagem de avião acaba aqui, a oito mil quilómetros de casa, a 22 horas da partida. Com 16 anos. Ao sair para o ar da noite levo com o jacto quente do motor do avião. Ou assim penso, até verificar que o reactor está debaixo da asa, lá para trás. O que sinto é a atmosfera do Sul da China, húmida, persistente e gelatinosa. O ar, impossivelmente quente, condensa-se na pele em gotas de suor viscoso. A roupa ganha um novo atrito contra o corpo, colando-se a ele. Até os pensamentos ficam abafados, juntamente com os sons envolventes, absorvidos pelo ar, aquáticos.

Talvez seja por isso que Hong Kong e Macau existem mais de noite, dentro de mim. Cheguei aqui pela primeira vez há 20 anos.

A face de Macau é múltipla, enrugada, e ganha dramatismo quando iluminada por candeeiros de rua. Torna-se projectada, fantasmagórica, gráfica.

Andando pelas ruas, à noite, encontra-se em cada esquina um pormenor que ficaria bem no papel. Os fios de telecomunicações e de electricidade são traços que unem as fachadas, que as vandalizam. Em vez de grafitis, as pessoas exprimem-se com intervenções utilitárias clandestinas, que a tudo se sobrepõem. O impossível bulício do dia é, à noite, subentendido pelos seus vestígios. Tanto o asfalto como as fachadas dos prédios exibem marcas das derrapagens do dia anterior.

É a única cidade que conheço onde não se sente medo na rua, fora de horas. Parece que a qualidade envolvente do ar, húmido e quente, transmite uma segurança acrescida. Um retorno a um ambiente amniótico, de liberdade contemplativa.



O RESTAURANTE É PEQUENO, MAS TEM UM PRIMEIRO ANDAR ONDE quase sempre há lugar. Procuro sossego e sento-me lá em cima, onde apenas outra mesa está ocupada. Instalo-me perto do grupo de cinco adolescentes chineses que comem em silêncio. Têm uniformes da mesma escola, mas usam-nos com pequenas variações de personalidade que os tornam distintos, humanos. Os que mantêm o casaco nas costas revelam o nome da escola, Brito.

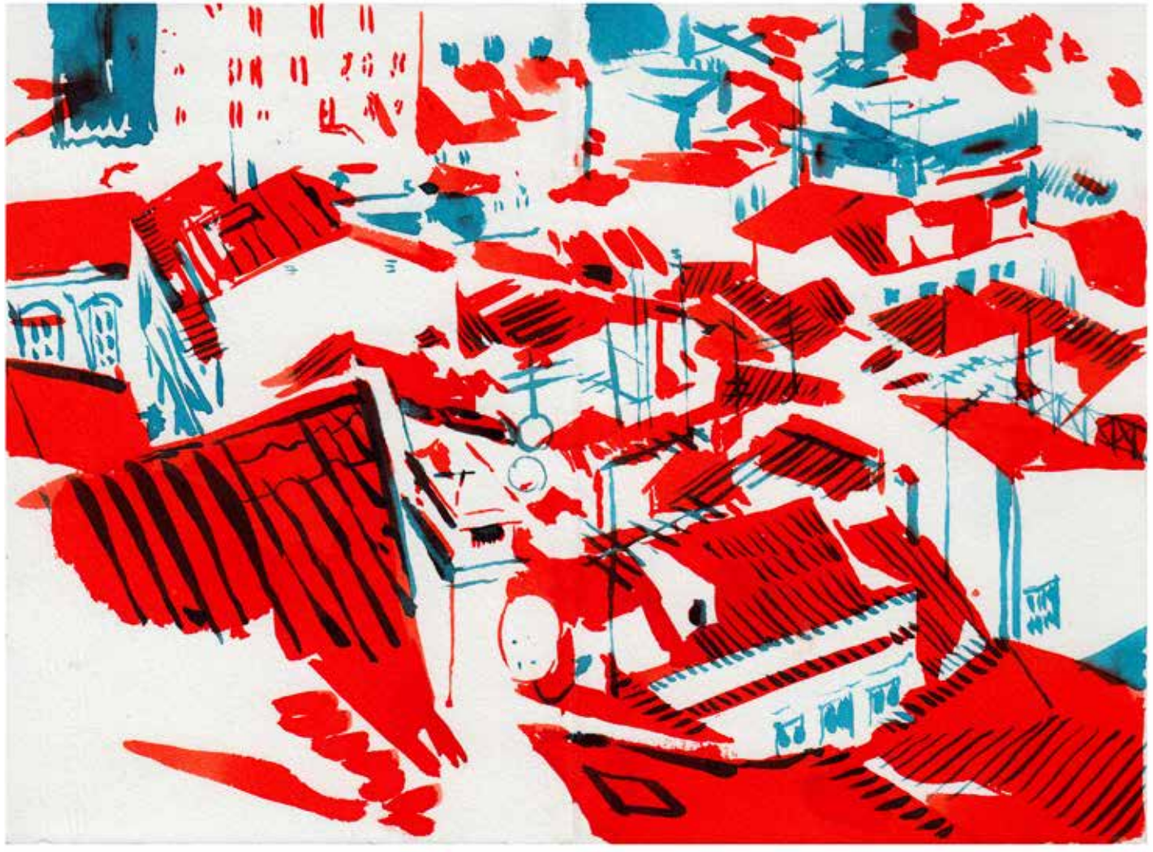
Gosto de comer a ler, e por estes dias o mais prático é ler no telefone, desafiando todas as supostas regras de leitura saudável. Dá mais jeito do que um livro, não se tem de manter as páginas abertas, não se tem de transportar na mão antes e depois da refeição. Após alguns minutos a tentar arranjar uma hierarquia para o manuseamento do telefone e o dos talheres, reparo no silêncio. Ninguém fala na mesa ao lado. Três estão a olhar para o telefone, um come massa sofregamente e tem a boca cheia, outro, enorme, parece de poucas falas e olha à volta com ar de porteiro de discoteca. Um deles distrai-se do telefone e olha na minha direcção, intrigado. O que come esparguete levanta os olhos do prato de vez em quando para tentar ver o que o seu amigo tanto observa no telefone, concentrado. Mas ninguém fala. Não há um som.

Dizem que vivemos na era da informação, e estamos constantemente cercados por ferramentas de comunicação. Sabemos o que se passa com cada um dos nossos amigos ou ídolos, ou pelo menos temos essa ilusão. Porque o que nos é fornecido é o guião idealizado que cada um escreve

para a sua própria vida, em tempo real, nas redes sociais. Viver tornou-se um acto estético. Noutros tempos houve quem até gastasse dinheiro a comprar livros que mostrassem um determinado estatuto social. Nem era preciso lê-los. Hoje em dia há uma desmaterialização da ostentação, no sentido em que já não contam os livros que mostramos na estante, mas sim os que dizemos que lemos e o que citamos. As viagens que fazemos, a comida que comemos, as opiniões que temos, os textos que escrevemos. Tudo comprovado com milhares de fotografias tiradas naquele segundo de sublimação e transcendência, adequadamente vivido e filtrado por um ecrã de telemóvel que colocamos apressadamente à frente de tudo o que seja susceptível de querermos que seja lembrado. Amamos, viajamos, comemos e dançamos para uma audiência, a maior parte das vezes imaginária, porque nem todos somos estrelas de Hollywood nem temos quem se interesse pelo que fazemos. Não posso deixar de pensar que, sendo a espécie humana, por natureza, social, não quer dizer que o seja mais naturalmente em rede. Porque a interacção passa a ser interna e constantemente múltipla, sem correspondente física. É abstracta, um comportamento embrionário da telepatia. Já sabemos tudo o que queremos saber antes de estarmos frente a frente com quem está do outro lado da linha. E temos sede de mais, de procurar mais já, neste instante. Na alvorada da revolução digital houve quem dissesse que a leitura estaria em perigo. Mas hoje parece ser a fala que se torna obsoleta, enquanto lemos o que os outros escrevem, pensam, querem, fazem, desdenham.

Levantei os olhos do telefone e apanhei o jovem chinês ainda a olhar para mim, como se eu fosse o foco de maior interesse naquele instante. Todos os outros na mesa estavam no seu mundo particular, surfando como eu um mundo infinito de realidades na ponta dos dedos.

Olhámo-nos nos olhos e percebi que nenhum de nós estava ali.



Olho para a asa a oscilar, dançando ao ritmo da turbulência que sacode o avião ao começar a descida para Istambul e, como de costume, lembro-me de que estatisticamente as alturas de maior risco num voo são a descolagem e a aterragem. Em Lisboa terei de ir directamente ao velório de um amigo da família, da geração da minha mãe. Se lá chegar. Paranóico, penso sempre que o avião vai cair, que uma vida pode mudar ou acabar num piscar de olhos inesperado. Mas obrigo-me a cirandar pelo mundo, apesar do medo. No final de contas ou se vive ou não, e não convém deixar as coisas a meio.

Nós, os ateus, temos uma relação estranha com a morte. Não há nada por que ansiar nem por que temer. Simplesmente deixa-se de existir, o que equivale a um não sentimento, bom ou mau. É como sentir o antes de nascer. Ou a ausência de quem nunca chegámos a conhecer. Mas o medo continua lá, a definir mais ou menos a nossa vida. Percebo que se seja religioso e não acredito que a religião seja alguma vez completamente substituída por uma visão mais iluminada do mundo, baseada em coisas que se possam testar, conhecer. Vamos ter sempre necessidade de explicar o medo da morte, simplesmente porque existe, imune a racionalizacões hábeis para a sua falta de lógica. E por mais que biologia, sociologia, psicologia e genética nos expliquem o porquê do instinto de sobrevivência, da protecção da prole e dos demais comportamentos inatos, o facto é que a angústia está lá, embebida em nós. A pedir uma razão mais simples e imediatamente tangível.

Tento racionalizar o que sinto ao ver a asa a lutar pela sustentação da enorme máquina que me tenta magicamente pousar em segurança no solo, no alcatrão escondido lá em baixo, no fundo do nevoeiro. Talvez a causa do medo seja não saber, nunca poder prever se e quando algo vai correr mal. No outro dia tive de desenhar a caricatura de um homem que descobriu que tinha um cancro terminal e que iria durar mais uns meses. Angustiado toda a vida com a sua própria existência, agora estava calmo e feliz. A espera estava a chegar ao fim, podia relaxar.

Acho que sim, talvez seja essa a origem do medo. É também por isso que não gosto de filmes de terror. Ao lidar com a morte, é o *suspense* que me mata.

Largo do Limoeiro, Lisboa, Portugal 13 Fev 2013

Jardim Augusto Gil, Graça, Lisboa, Portugal 14 Fev 2013

Campo de Santa Clara, Lisboa, Portugal 17 Fev 2013

Telhados de Alfama, Lisboa, Portugal 17 Fev 2013

Marina do Parque das Naçõ̃es, Lisboa, Portugal 19 Fev 2013

Vista de Nossa Senhora do Monte, Lisboa, Portugal 27 Fev 2013

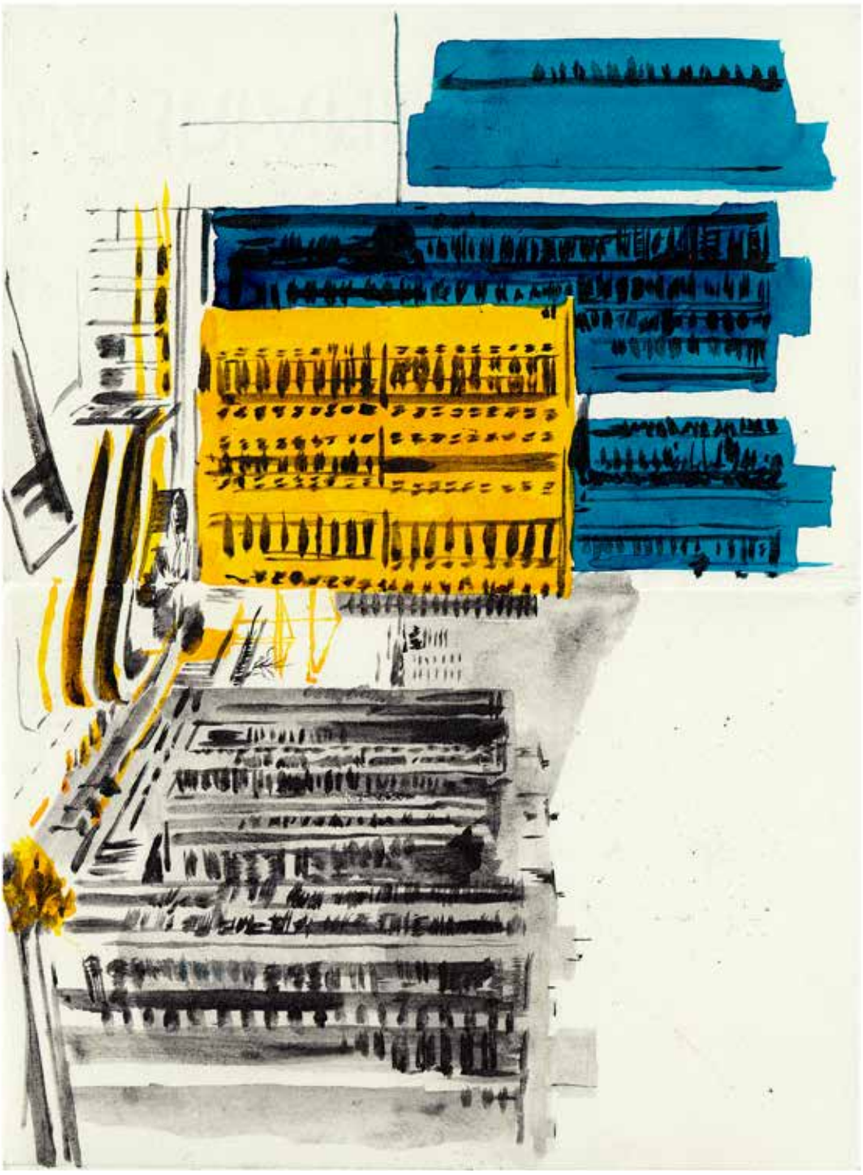
Acordo de manhã, subo o estore do quarto e a vista é a do cos-tume, o parque de entrada do prédio com os caixotes do lixo a demarcarem o passeio. Está um casal de meia-idade a rebuscar um dos caixotes. Não é a primeira vez que os vejo, a cena é-me familiar. Mesmo ao lado, como de costume, está uma carrinha parada, de portas abertas, o que revela a sua pertença ao casal. A sua aparente cumplicidade, muda, calma e metódica, empresta dignidade ao que fazem, mesmo que salpicada pelo lixo dos outros. Dentro da carrinha entrevêem-se os despojos de incontáveis buscas pela quinquilharia descartável de Lisboa. Suponho que seja uma rotina diária deste casal, um ritual de subsistência. Pergunto-me o que encontrarão todos os dias que justifique que continuem. O orgulho e noções enraizadas de classe não nos permitem sequer apontar a nossa curiosidade a um caixote de lixo, estamos mais habituados a recolher conchas e seixos polidos na praia, ou ossos descarnados no campo. Temos o preconceito instintivo de que a natureza é limpa, e de que nós não fazemos parte dela, para o bem e para o mal. Na verdade, acredito que se encontre muita coisa útil no lixo urbano, quem sabe o suficiente para se suprimir a maior parte dos desejos materiais. Basta desviar o olhar da janela para dentro de casa, e verificar que metade dos nossos pertences poderiam bem estar dentro de um daqueles contentores. Mas por enquanto está tudo aqui em casa, protegido por abstractos laços sentimentais e de preguiça.

Quase simultaneamente, entra em cena no mesmo passeio um amolador, com a sua flauta de Pã a atrair fregueses. Passa em frente do casal atarefado em roda dos caixotes, sem reparar neles, com os olhos postos nas janelas elevadas dos prédios residenciais, sempre a assobiar com a flauta. O som que produz atrai olhares e memórias de infância, e fala de um tempo em que a nossa vida ainda não era feita inteiramente de descartáveis. Espera que antes de deitarmos fora as nossas facas e tesouras o chamemos para insuflar vida ao que já mal nos serve.

Basta subir um estore e, de janela aberta, pode escolher-se entre passado, presente e futuro. Deitar fora, resistir ou tentar salvar o que nos resta.

Rua da Praia Grande, Macau, China 05 Abr 2013

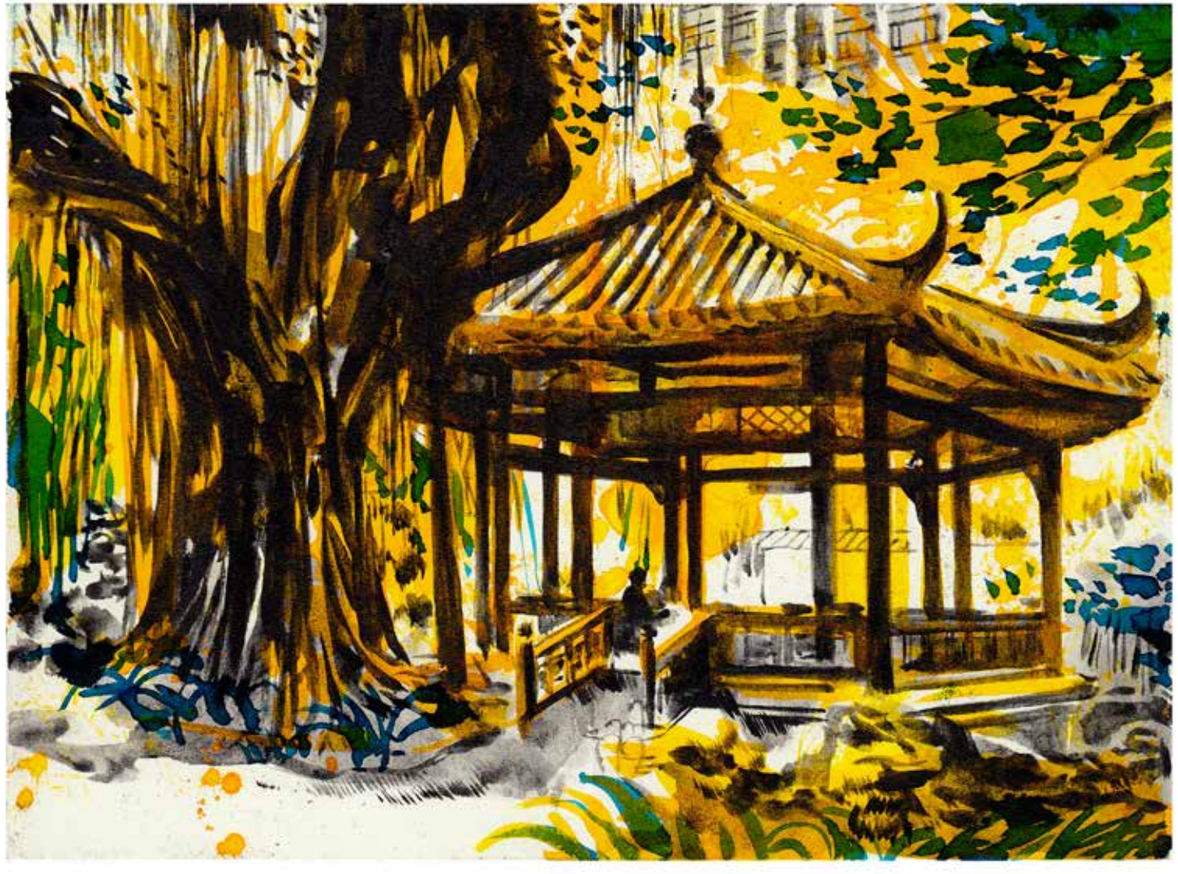
Vista do Forte de Mong-Há, Macau 07 Abr 2013



Fai-Chi-Kei, vista do Forte de Mong-Há, Macau, China 07 Abr 2013

Telhados vistos do parque de Mong-Há, Macau, China 07 Abr 2013

Rua Coronel Mesquita, Macau, China 07 Abr 2013



Os últimos três dias foram uma névoa. Viajo sem tirar férias e trabalho em andamento. Em Macau desenho a Thatcher, para Londres, enquanto critico o governo português num *cartoon* para o *Diário de Notícias* de Lisboa. Dormito, sonho com família e amigos do outro lado do mundo, tenho pesadelos, acordo e obrigo-me a aceitar fazer uma ilustração evocativa da obra-prima norte-americana *Moby Dick* para a *Vanity Fair*. Estou no limite das forças. O trabalho sempre viajou à minha frente para alguns cantos do mundo e desloca-se mais ligeiro. E desde o ano passado decidi viajar também, constantemente, mas a contra-ciclo dos desenhos, numa pendularidade simétrica. Calhou assim, ainda nem sei bem porquê. Se faço um desenho para os EUA devo estar em Macau, se penso num desenho para Londres talvez esteja em Moçambique, quando recebo *emails* de Zurique apetece-me Xangai. Sem dúvida é sinal de que os sítios por onde gosto de me mover não têm o mercado que procura o meu trabalho. Também não é incomum pai e filhos terem gostos diferentes. Fujo do Inverno e os desenhos procuram a beira das lareiras.

Sem pensar nem dormir o suficiente, é mais um barco, um aeroporto, um avião, escalas atrás de escalas, numa sucessão interminável de refeições ligeiras em que uma das hipóteses é sempre *chicken*, depois do *check-in* antes dos raios X, metais no tabuleiro, *do you have liquids*, *boarding*

pass please, *would you like something to drink*, *fasten seat belt*, *prepare for landing*, balcão de *transfer*, passadeiras, passadeiras. Sei que transito por estes sítios porque vejo o meu reflexo a ser arrastado, imóvel, por uma eterna parede de vidraças que se sobrepõem a uma infinidade de aviões de cores diversas e com potenciais destinos. O meu foi escolhido sem pensar muito nisso, sem pesquisas nem preparações. Foram dados lançados há uma semana e já me esqueci do porquê, já não importa. Finalmente espero com olhar vago, ao lado de um tapete de borracha, que subitamente se começa a mover, pego na última réstia de familiaridade que me acompanha na forma de uma mala e saio para a rua depois do derradeiro carimbo, pisco os olhos e…

O homem à frente de uma legião de muitos mais, todos vestidos do mesmo caqui, pergunta-me se quero um táxi, e eu aceito, dizendo o destino final que ainda consegui decorar: Afonso Guest House, Panjim, Goa.

A estrada serpenteia por uma costa forrada a vegetação alta, tropical. Coqueiros, palmeiras a perder de vista e por vezes, meio escondidas pela folhagem omnipresente, construções quase familiares; já vi aquilo em qualquer lado. São igrejas, transplantadas de uma qualquer aldeia alentejana ou beiroa. O cenário é pacífico, o mar calmo, está calor. Fecho os olhos e penso numa cama, uma qualquer, não importa onde.

São sete e meia da manhã, e na Afonso Guest House sou recebido por uma senhora que deve ser a matriarca do clã, do negócio familiar. De uma simpatia extrema, pergunta-me, num português perfeito, se sou o André. Olho à volta, tentando absorver o famoso bairro das Fontainhas, onde dizem que Portugal ainda se esconde e sobrevive às vassouradas da história e do orgulho nacional indiano. “Parece Portugal, não é?” pergunta ela, deixando-me curioso. Pergunto-lhe “Já esteve em Portugal?” “Não”, diz ela sorrindo, “mas é o que costumam dizer.” Estou inclinado a concordar, é parecido com alguma coisa que já vi em Portugal, ou não, com alguma coisa que já vi num postal de Portugal à venda na Rua Augusta ou, espera, nem é bem isso, é muito parecido com todos os lugares espalhados pelo mundo que dizem ser parecidos com Portugal. Com o original, nem tanto. É parecido com algumas ruas de Maputo e de Pemba, com bairros históricos do Rio de Janeiro, com becos em Macau cujas varandas coloniais são sustentadas por vigas de ferro que as salvam da degradação. É uma arquitectura portuguesa que tenta lidar com o calor, que deixa circular o ar. Mas também lembra algumas casas senhoriais lá na terra do meu avô na Beira Alta, que a minha mãe explicava serem construídas por gente que voltava do Brasil, cheia de dinheiro e de tendências arquitectónicas coloniais. É um Portugal que não se apercebe de que já não é o mesmo e não pode existir fora daqui, ainda com o tal ADN que reconhecemos, mas que cresceu com raízes implantadas neste lugar, com os nutrientes deste solo. É nosso, mas nem tanto.

O quarto, esse, é meu por agora. E a cama serve perfeitamente.

Ao acordar depois de muito tempo sem dormir, há sempre uns breves instantes em que se processa o ambiente, e em alguns casos se pára para pensar o que raio se passou. Basta abrir a janela, passar alguma água pela cara, um breve passeio na rua e confirma-se a conclusão a que tinha chegado relutantemente, ao abrir os olhos após quatro horas de sono. Estou na Índia. Numa Índia, para ser mais preciso. Sento-me na esplanada recomendada pelo guia e pelo homem da *guest house*, e peço uma cerveja. Tinha saudades deste calor que nos obriga a beber cerveja estupidamente gelada, que nos relaxa os músculos e faz baixar os ombros, esticar o pescoço e atirar a cabeça para trás, de olhos fechados. *"Hello, how are you?"* pergunta a senhora. Está à beira do alpendre onde estou sentado e percebe-se que é a dona do estabelecimento. Mete conversa, quer saber de mim, de onde venho. Ela anima-se. *"Oh Portugal, I've been to Portugal! Fifteen days, I went to Fatima!"* Lembro-me de que no pedido de visto para a Índia perguntavam a religião, um acto de prudência estatística que dá pistas para tudo o que de mau pode acontecer em nome do deus ou deuses de cada um. Eu sou cada vez mais ateu militante, mas que acredita na tolerância entre credos. Sabendo perfeitamente que um credo tem sempre uma base de intolerância aos

outros credos. No entanto quanto mais passo fronteiras e verifico que as coisas que nos unem são tantas mais do que as que nos separam mais começo a ficar impaciente com bairrismos, clubismos e nacionalismos, regionalismos e ismos que mais se assemelham a istmos, estrangulamentos cada vez mais apertados que dificultam a passagem livre de um aperto de mão a um abraço, normalmente entre pessoas tão semelhantes nas suas diferenças. Mas não tenho coragem de o dizer a esta senhora tão sinceramente amável. Ela continua: *"In Fatima there was this olive tree. An olive tree! And all the olives, many many, were laying on the ground. Such a waste..."* Percebo o que ela quer dizer e começo a sorrir, digo-lhe o meu nome e pergunto-lhe o dela. *"Linda, my name is Linda."* O empregado do restaurante de serviço à esplanada, que ouvia a conversa ao lado da senhora, de cara fechada e impávido, mais novo, quase mal encarado, reage como autómato e aponta para cima da minha cabeça, autoritário. Olho para cima e vejo um letreiro que parece o nome da rua, embebido na fachada, mas em que está escrito *Linda's Viva Panjim Restaurant*. Percebi, OK, chama-se Linda. O empregado volta a olhar o vazio, calado, ao lado da dona. Dona do restaurante ou dele, não se percebe bem. Voltando ao fio da meada, volto também a sorrir. De todo o fausto e ritual que Fátima envolve, e sem ser em detrimento da fé genuína que esta senhora deve sentir, o que a chocou e marcou mais foi o desperdício das azeitonas da oliveirinha sagrada. Explico-lhe que foi por cima da oliveira que os três pastorinhos viram a Virgem Maria,

semente para todo o estendal moderno à volta, capelas, autocarros, promessas, altares e velas. Órgãos amputados feitos de cera, de esperanças. A minha tendência para a analogia visual cómica prepara-se para dizer que as azeitonas no chão são meras caganitas do cordeiro de deus, e portanto igualmente sagradas, mas seria demais. Ela conta que está habituada a viver com o que tem, sem desperdício, sem estadão, simples. No interior do restaurante está uma secretária a par com as mesas de comida, e é onde ela trabalha e recebe, no meio dos clientes que comem. Fala-me das filhas, espalhadas pelo mundo, e eu penso em desenhos ao sabor do vento e das lareiras anglo-saxónicas. Quantas pessoas que já passaram fome ficarão com a imagem das azeitonas no chão de Fátima? Digo-lhe que aqui, no seu país, também há devoção, monumentos, presenças imponentes da história. Um mosaico mais rico e intrincado de crenças milenares. *"Yes, but Fatima is Fatima"* conclui ela pacientemente.

Toca um sino; surpreende-me. Mais uma vez sou teleportado para a Beira Alta, acordado pelo badalar da igreja de Escalhão, a aldeia do meu avô. Mas é a capela de São Sebastião, mesmo ali ao lado. *"Do you hear this bell?"* salta ela atenta, a olhar um ponto indistinto no céu, de dedo de professora primária em riste. *"It means someone died."* Fico confuso; como é que ela sabe que não é outra coisa qualquer? *"It's this kind of ding, ding-dong... ding, ding-dong."* O ritmo do sino

chama o luto ao bairro. Ela desculpa-se com um sorriso e vai para dentro. Quer ligar a alguém para saber quem partiu. Já não tem mais tempo para quem acabou de chegar.

Do outro lado do estreito beco onde se encontra o alpendre onde estou sentado vejo recortes de jornais pendurados, elogios ao restaurante Viva Panjim. E a foto dela, mais nova, com o nome completo. Linda de Souza, pois claro. Afinal Portugal está aqui tão perto.

Valvoline

Cada partida é um reencontro, cada regresso uma fuga. Ou talvez desistência. Saio à procura de não precisar de mais nada do que o que consigo transportar comigo, cortando o cordão umbilical que nos une a tudo o que se acumula à nossa volta. Objectos, posses, obrigações, afectos. Em casa fico mais lento, mais ancorado e inerte. E sinto-me submerso. Pergunto-me o que são todas estas coisas que enchem as estantes e os armários à minha volta. Daqui a cem anos ninguém se importará com o livro que guardei teimosamente e no qual nunca voltei a pegar. Fora de casa ganho claridade e leveza, uma forma mais despojada.

Mas ando pelo mundo e já não quero ser turista. Não quero a pressão de ter de ver os sítios, os monumentos, as coisas fantásticas. Quero estar em lugares como se sempre lá tivesse estado, de tempos a tempos reparando em algo que mereça atenção, naturalmente. Criando hábitos de familiaridade sempre que possa, passando mais tempo no café da esquina. Ou dentro de portas a ler com a janela aberta, deixando as palavras serem contaminadas pelos sons de ruas que me são estranhas. Por vezes o sítio onde quero fazer maior esforço de fruição e de conhecimento é Lisboa. Porque me irrita toda a gente que anda pelo mundo fora a tirar as mesmas fotos que os outros, nos mesmos sítios para onde são atirados por catapultas movidas a jacto, exibindo no regresso a sua imensa tolerância para com todos os costumes pitorescos e típicos e tão engraçados, antes de dizerem mal da cor da saia da colega do trabalho. Do capachinho do chefe.

É ao virar da esquina da minha casa que quero descobrir um recanto onde nunca fui, parar à sombra da árvore que sempre contornei. Perguntar pelas histórias que devia saber. Quero apanhar um autocarro de turista no Terreiro do Paço e sobrevoar a Baixa de helicóptero. Quero tratar Lisboa bem, falar melhor com ela, olhá-la com olhos de ver. Pensando melhor sou eu o culpado do desgaste na nossa convivência. Porque uma relação longa exige trabalho e dedicação, entrega consciente. E dura uma vida. Gasto-me em lugares que nunca perderam tempo comigo, e viro as costas à cidade que me fez.

Cada partida é descarnar e ficar com um tutano que não queremos deixar para trás, mas que pode ser-nos redutor. Em casa, como noutro sítio qualquer, temos de nos esforçar por não virar as costas a nós mesmos. Na nossa cidade é mais difícil, porque ela é espelho de quem dela depende e de quem com ela sofre, e muitas vezes não gostamos do que vemos. Conhece-nos demasiado bem. Em todos os regressos encontramos à nossa espera a identidade que costumamos vestir em casa, amarfanhada no sítio onde a deixáramos à pressa, pronta a ser sacudida e usada outra vez. Resta saber se a nudez valeu a pena.

Procuramos um sentido para a vida debaixo de pedras feitas de crenças calcificadas pelo tempo. Pergunto-me se alguém encontra verdadeiramente alguma coisa, por detrás de tanta cara iluminada de certezas. Eu não, e estou tramado. Mas ultimamente foi-me dada uma pista. Parece-me que o tal sentido tem de ser profundamente individual, partindo do princípio de que cada um é autor de uma parte do seu percurso e sabe de onde vem, intui para onde quer ir. Ou para onde não quer. Desconfio de respostas demasiado fáceis e abrangentes, formulaicas e movediças, sem conteúdo. Adaptáveis a toda a gente.

Parece-me que o maior sinal de que a busca acabou é quando se deixa de ter necessidade de a fazer. Descobri que deixo de pensar em procurar quando desenho à vista, quando registo o que me rodeia. Desenhar tem o poder de abrandar tudo, de me tornar mais imerso num canto particular da realidade. Não penso em mais nada a não ser no que estou a ver. Aliás não penso, olho. E é o desenho que encontra por mim.

Talvez seja o mais próximo de um propósito que alguma vez encontrarei. Até agora pensei sempre no problema ao contrário. Não tenho de saber o que procurar, tenho de perceber quando não procuro e acarinhar esses momentos. E isso acontece sempre que me sento e calmamente inspiro o que me rodeia, exalando um desenho. No fundo talvez não seja assim tão mau, posso antever o meu papel na ordem cósmica das coisas. Sou uma mera testemunha.

Devo estar a ter uma reacção a tudo o que nos bombardeia diariamente nos *media*, na Internet, nas redes sociais e afins. Constelações de informação pulverizada, que nos estimulam constantemente e nos dão a ilusão de sabermos muito acerca de tudo. Na verdade não sabemos nada em profundidade, sabemos um pouco de muitas coisas. Arranhamos a superfície de incontáveis assuntos, confiantes em que, mesmo que não estejamos correctos, podemos consultar o telemóvel e ajustar a nossa percepção. Relegámos a nossa memória para os *gadgets*, e utilizamo-los como discos externos de *backup* das nossas vivências, eventos, opiniões, afectos. O nosso cérebro torna-se a memória RAM, *ready available memory*, com meras capacidades de processamento em tempo real do que vai acontecendo, mas sem fixar nada. Descartável. O que está registado é o que conta. Mas fica a pergunta: se o que define a nossa conduta e a nossa resposta emocional ao que vivemos é a memória de eventos passados, como será que olhamos o mundo quando essa memória está deslocalizada, fora de nós? Lembro-me de que um dia, puto, vi a minha mãe chorar em frente da televisão. Não percebi porquê, fiquei assustado e intrigado. Mostravam imagens de uma praça e de uns tanques, e de um pequeno homem a enfrentá-los. Diziam que era na China. Adolescente, ainda não possuía a bagagem emocional que me permitisse projectar-me na luta de outros por liberdade. Um velho comove-se mais do que uma criança, porque a empatia se baseia no conhecimento acumulado de experiências pessoais, e no reconhecimento das mesmas dores nos outros. Comoção é recordar. Uma criança chora de dor ou de medo. É o limite do seu saber.

Se o acesso à informação se tornou quase ubíquo e se a própria produção de informação nos envolve a todos, diariamente, constantemente, temos de arranjar capacidade para a armazenar num sítio com muito mais espaço, fora das nossas limitadas cabeças. Mas isso implica arriscarmo-nos a perder a catalogação emocional que damos às nossas experiências, o mapa pelo qual navegamos ética e moralmente pelo mundo e que nos indica as fronteiras na nossa identidade. Como podemos relacionar-nos com o nosso presente e com o nosso futuro se a nossa memória foi alvo de *outsourcing* para dentro das nossas câmaras, computadores, telefones, *tablets*? Porque a partir de certa altura já não utilizamos as memórias externas só para o excesso de registos, utilizamo-las para tudo. E simplesmente gravamos, fotografamos, filmamos cada vez mais, sem parar e em trânsito, e demitimo-nos de o que fazer com os resultados.

Daí a minha reacção enviesada. Quando viajo insisto em me confinar a recantos cada vez mais pequenos no novo e vasto sítio que devia descobrir. No limite posso passar dias na mesma esplanada, no mesmo beco, imune a tentações externas. É que quero conhecer pelo menos aquele

cantinho, obrigar a mente a assimilar, a não delegar na foto instantânea. Talvez assim o consiga levar sempre comigo, sem ajuda.

Praia de Agonda, Goa, Índia 24 Abr 2013

Dirigíamo-nos em velocidade para a praia de Palolem numa sim- ples acelera. A estrada sinuosa estava em completa escuridão, unicamente iluminada pelo ocasional veículo que nos encadeava, vindo em direcção contrária. Sem capacete, em calções e chinelos, qualquer erro de condução seria desastroso, a centenas de quilómetros de qualquer possível assistência. Tenho medo de motas, mas em Goa não há hipótese. É nestas alturas, e só nestas alturas, que tenho de acreditar na providência. Nada como um pequeno cagaço para nos dar alguma fé.

Há apenas umas escassas horas o condutor era-me completamente desconhecido. De alguma forma estes últimos dias têm sido uma revelação silenciosa. A praia de Agonda foi-me recomendada por alguns goeses solícitos, em duas ocasiões distintas, e confiei no que o acaso me punha à frente. Com alguma pesquisa *online* acabei por vir parar a uma cabana virada directamente para a praia. A ausência de turistas sublinha o final de época. No restaurante, também empoleirado na praia, tenho estado quase sempre sozinho ou acompanhado por um ou dois casais isolados. Criei o costume de combinar banho de mar com banho de sol e com trabalho, pois este nunca me deixa completamente em paz. Mas a indispensável ligação *wi-fi* é caprichosa. E mudam a *password* frequentemente.

Passar muito tempo sozinho pode ser perigoso. Há vozes internas que se tornam mais audazes, e nos afunilam em construções mentais que não nos deixam pausar. Para essas não é necessário *login* e não há interruptor *offline*. Tento aceitar viver coisas sem as partilhar com ninguém, tento não me importar de sentir saudades, de procurar no horizonte algo que sei não estar lá. Mergulho no mar batido e ao voltar à superfície olho à volta, somente para verificar que estou sozinho em três quilómetros de praia. O primeiro instinto é perguntar o porquê de estar ali. E saber que o truque é não fazer perguntas.

O mar torna-se presença autoritária, pelo martelar implacável das ondas. À noite continua lá, inamovível mas em constante fricção espraiada, uma parede de som interminável, que define os limites do meu quarto, e presentemente do meu mundo. É o mar que me vai desbastando a pouco e pouco, sacudindo futilidades e ponderações elípticas. Com o passar dos dias começa-se simplesmente a estar, sem muitas preocupações com o que se deve ser.

"Are you single? Also, are you gay?" As duas perguntas que me deixam num estado de divertimento eufórico, com riso incontrolável de surpresa, são proferidas pelo meu anfitrião. Não tinha reparado nele, mas ao verificar que no restaurante a rede não estava a funcionar e pedia uma nova *password*, levantei-me com o computador e dirigi-me à recepção. *"I can give*

you the password, come here." De uma mesa ao lado um homem indiano, que aparentava a minha idade, chamava-me. Ainda não o tinha visto aqui, e parecia estar de passagem, com *laptop* e alguns livros em cima da mesa. Disse-me que era um dos sócios do pequeno complexo de *bungalows*, um advogado de Mumbai que tinha decidido investir na costa de Goa. Contei-lhe que estava aqui porque sim. Dispôs-se rapidamente a mostrar-me alguns sítios que não eram imediatamente visíveis nos guias turísticos, mas de repente parou, sorriu com um olhar de esguelha e disparou: *"Wait a minute, are you single? Are you gay?"*

Gosto sempre de falar com pessoas que verbalizam aquilo que não tenho coragem de dizer. E talvez este esclarecimento fosse necessário para passarmos a uma outra fase de interacção, mais de acordo com os interesses de cada um. Quanto ao tom levemente homofóbico, por agora passa, varrido temporariamente para debaixo do tapete da tolerância cultural. Sim, não. Risota e adiante. *"To tell you the truth I only asked because I knew the answer already."* Vivaço, o rapaz.

Tem uma figura curiosa. Baixo e muito moreno, apesar de se classificar de pele clara, parece uma versão indiana do Al Pacino, em novo, sempre com um sorriso trocista nos lábios. Diz que me quer mostrar a praia de Palolem, os bares estão lá, cheios de loucura e diversão, a um tirinho de estrada. Ao fim do dia vai-me procurar. Lá se vai a introspecção zen aquática. O Al Pacino fez-me uma oferta irrecusável.

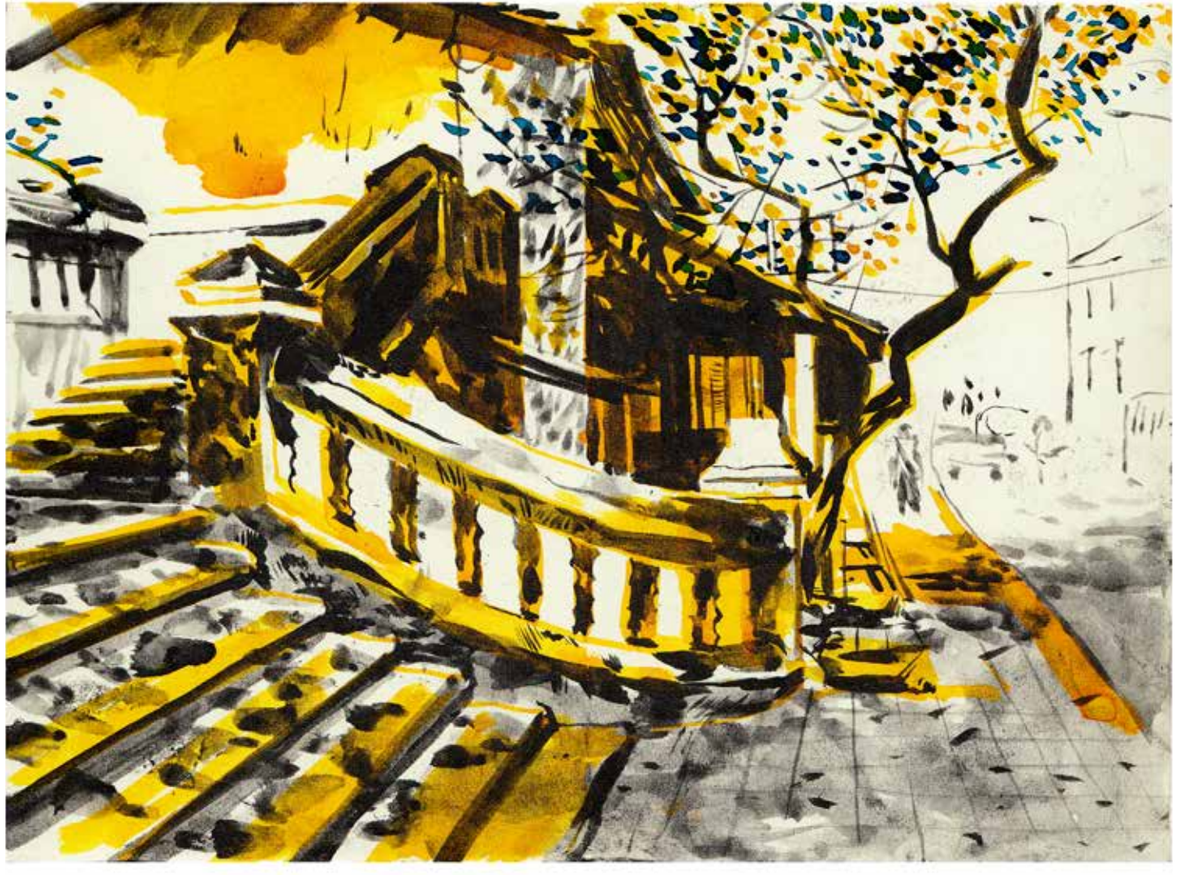
"So, do you want the car or the bike?" Olho para o carro preto, robusto, e para a frágil acelera e tento visualizar o caminho escuro nos dois sentidos, um dos quais será provavelmente regado a algo mais que gasolina. Ao menos o carro deve ter *airbags*. *"No, no, the bike is safer. The car is too big for the road, it's more dangerous."* Suponho que algumas lógicas de segurança estejam também sujeitas aos costumes de cada país. Seja o que Ganesh, o removedor de obstáculos, quiser.

Pendurado na acelera, vou tentando ouvir o Rahul a filosofar, sobre Goa, a Índia, as mulheres, espiritualidade e Verão. Esquecendo-se de olhar para a estrada, vai-se virando para trás enquanto me tenta explicar uma espécie de teoria unificada da mulher estrangeira, em gritos abafados pela velocidade. *"Andre, you have to come here in high season! Lots of yoga girls! I love yoga girls! They are sooooo complicated!!!"* Ri-se dos certificados de instrutor de ioga dados em quinze dias, da ânsia fútil do Ocidente pela iluminação oriental de supermercado. Das gentes que aqui vêm à procura, sem tempo para a descoberta.

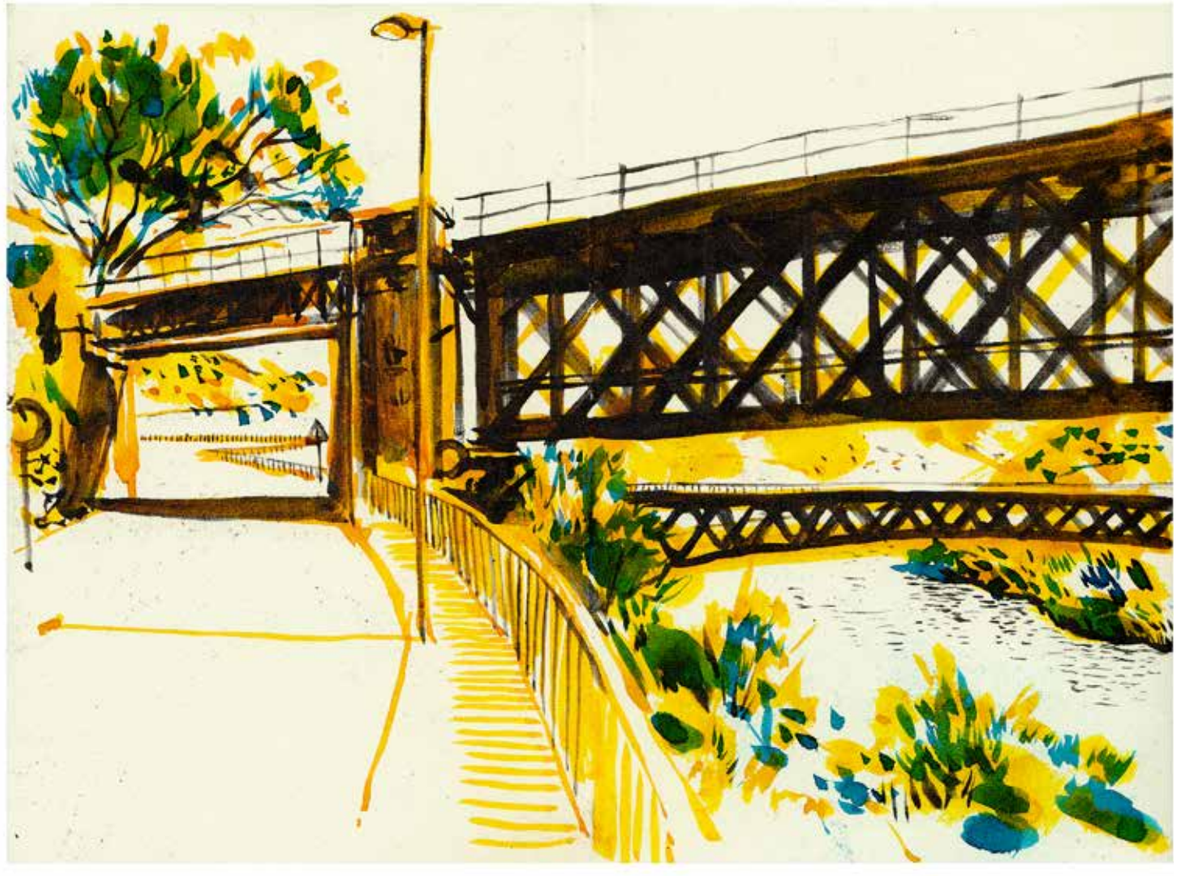
Realmente este pequeno périplo a Palolem só podia ser de mota. Assim as nossas gargalhadas correm livremente por entre a vegetação embrenhada na noite, dando-nos a ilusão de que os coqueiros se riem connosco. O riso faz-me fechar os olhos e relaxar, deixa-me ser conduzido. *"Tonight, Andre, I want to see some people! I want to see some complex faces!"*

Dito assim tudo parece simples.

Igreja da Imaculada Conceição, Panjim, Goa, Índia 05 Mai 2013



Rua Emídio Garcia, Panjim, Goa, Índia 06 Mai 2013



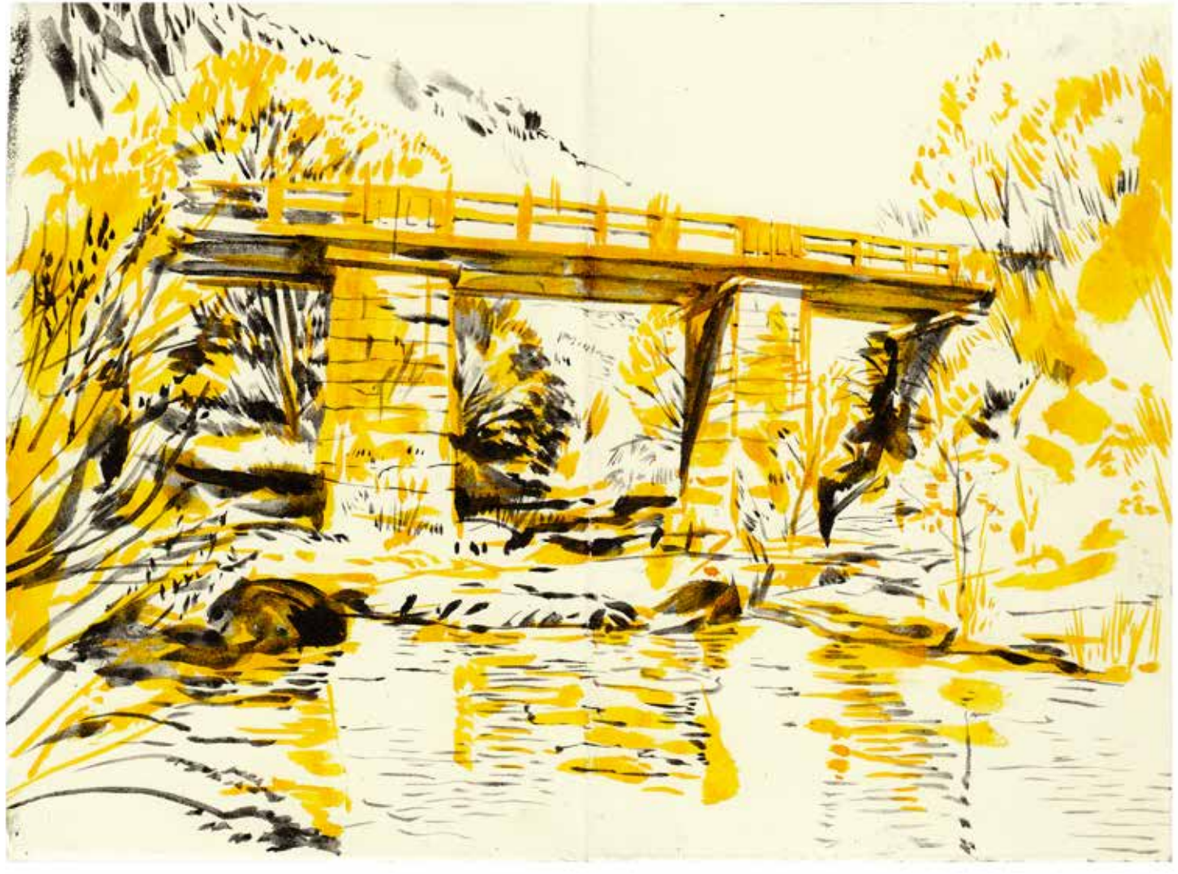
Ponte ferroviária internacional, Barca d'Alva, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Ponte romana, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Rio Aguiar, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Fonte medieval, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal

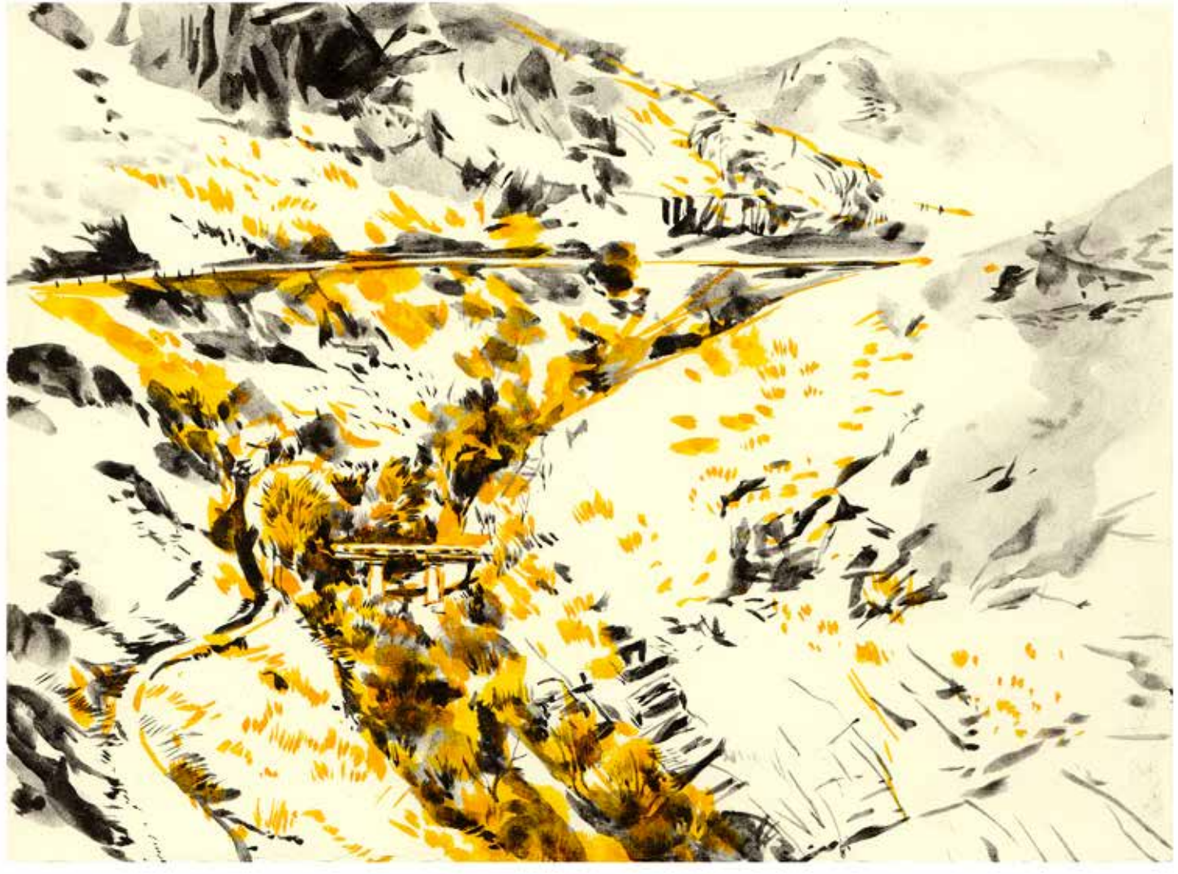
Paisagem seca, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal



Ponte das Alminhas, Ribeira do Mosteiro, Trás-os-Montes, Portugal 25 Ago 2013

Rio Côa, Aldeia das Cinco Vilas, Portugal 25 Ago 2013

Rio Águeda, Douro Internacional, Portugal 26 Ago 2013



Ponte das Alminhas, Estrada do Candedo, Trás-os-Montes, Portugal 27 Ago 2013

Nota do autor:

Todos os desenhos deste livro foram feitos presencialmente no local que retratam, à mão, com canetas, tintas acrílicas, grafite solúvel e aguarelas, e são aqui reproduzidos à escala real, com excepção das imagens de capa, contracapa e da página 132, que são originalmente um pouco maiores. Por vezes as condicionantes do local e de tempo exigiram que acabasse alguns pormenores de memória, mas não foram usadas fotografias como referência, nem meios digitais de manipulação de imagem. O que aqui se vê foi o que registei no papel, sem hipóteses de correcção.

Em contrapartida, os textos são registos *a posteriori* de eventos, situações e reflexões cuja tradução em desenho seria demasiado morosa e despropositada no contexto em foram vividos.

Na palavra abysmo, é a forma do y
que lhe dá profundidade, escuridão, mistério...
Escrevê-la com i latino é fechar a boca do abysmo,
é transformá-lo numa superfície banal.
Teixeira de Pascoaes

Edição #21
Lisboa, Fevereiro 2014
Texto, ilustrações, design e logótipo convidado André Carrilho
Revisão Raul Henriques
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Inércia é a tendência de um corpo
para se manter estacionário.
Ou para continuar em movimento.

FACULDADE DE CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS E HUMANAS
UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA

From *inércia* to *inertia*
Drawing on the Travel Experience

Elsa Maria Morgado Vieira

Trabalho de Projecto
Mestrado em Tradução (especialização em inglês)

Maio, 2018

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, Maria and Antonio Vieira. Without their journey to, and sacrifice as, Portuguese immigrants in the Unites States, I would not have had the opportunity to become immersed in a new non-native language, and would not have embarked on my own long journey towards this Master degree in Translation

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RESUMO

O objectivo deste trabalho de projecto, a tradução para inglês americano do livro de viagens ilustrado *inércia* (2013), de André Carrilho, acompanhada de um ensaio em que analiso as minhas próprias estratégias e opções como tradutora, visa, em última instância, a publicação do livro nos Estados Unidos da América e/ou no Reino Unido. A tarefa envolveu a elaboração de um comentário não apenas do meu processo de tradução, mas igualmente do rico conteúdo do próprio livro, o qual pode ser lido e discutido à luz de várias abordagens teóricas — globalização, pós-colonialismo e a condição pós-pós-moderna.

O trabalho de projecto inclui informação introdutória sobre o autor e o texto de partida, uma explicação da metodologia seguida e a versão final do texto de chegada. Explora e reflecte ainda sobre as bases teóricas do corpo do trabalho, especificamente no que diz respeito ao autor enquanto escritor de viagens — alguém que, afinal, tal como um tradutor, interpreta o Outro e molda a perpectiva que uma cultura tem de outra.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: tradução, escrita de viagem portuguesa contemporânea, André Carrilho, globalização, pós-colonialismo, pós-pós-modernismo, desafios e estratégias de tradução

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work-project, the translation into American English of André Carrilho's illustrated travel book in the form of a diary, *inertia* (2013), accompanied by an essay analyzing my own strategies and choices as translator, is to ultimately support the publishing of the book in the United States and/or in the United Kingdom. The task involved a commentary not only of my translation process, but also of the book's rich content itself, as it can be read and discussed in the light of various theoretical approaches – globalization, post-colonialism and the post postmodern condition.

The work-project contains introductory information on the author and the source text, an explanation of the methodology followed and the final target text in translation. It further explores and elaborates on the theoretical bases for the body of the work, specifically with regards to the author as travel writer — someone who, after all, like a translator, interprets the Other and shapes the perspective one culture has of another.

KEYWORDS: translation, contemporary Portuguese travel writing, André Carrilho, globalization, post-colonialism, post postmodernism, translation challenges and strategies

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1. Introduction: The Journey Begins

Tinha de ser, é sempre assim, que raiva. Ando numa ânsia de registos, fotografias, desenhos, vídeos, textos.

André Carrilho, *inércia*

[It had to be, it's always like that, infuriating. I'm in a documentation frenzy, photographs, drawings, videos, texts.]

Sometime during the summer of 2015, my good friend, the Portuguese illustrator André Carrilho, invited me to lunch on a Sunday afternoon in Lisbon. I have known André for many years, having met him in New York where I live part-time. We'd been introduced by mutual friends, and I no longer recall who it was who introduced us, but our friendship has stood the test of time and distance. Both previously avid travelers, some would say nomads, we have spent many hours, over many dinners and wine, with many international friends, having many memorable conversations over the past ten years or so. These encounters have taken place in Lisbon, our mutually native city; New York, where I grew up and lived most of my life, and several other locations where our paths may have crossed. Sometime during lunch, André very matter-of-factly asked me if I would like to translate a book he'd written, from Portuguese into English. And I very matter-of-factly said, of course, I'd be honored and, in fact, was going to be starting a Masters in Translation program at NOVA University, so perhaps I could do it as my final work-project. And that is pretty much how this journey began. A journey that has already taken me around the virtual globe and through a labyrinth of theories and challenges. And so, in a sense, you could say that I didn't choose this text, this text chose me, and that my friend André Carrilho and I embarked on a journey into this translation project together, on that Sunday afternoon in Lisbon.

1.1 The Author

Quando muito serei um nómada. Esse não faz turismo nem viaja. A sua casa está espraiada, estica-se por alguns sítios familiares. E volta a eles regularmente, ao sabor dos elementos.

André Carrilho, *inércia*

[If anything, I'm a nomad. That's neither a tourist nor a traveler. His home is expansive, it stretches across some familiar sites. And he returns to them regularly, goes where the wind blows.]

André Carrilho is a Portuguese-born illustrator whose mother is Portuguese and whose father is Mozambican. He was born in Lisbon in 1974, the year of The Carnation Revolution (the event that marked the end of the Salazarian regime (1933 – 1974) in Portugal, and of the Portuguese colonial project). His father first came to Portugal to study architecture from Pemba, Mozambique, and met his mother, also an architectural student, at the Faculdade de Arquitectura in Lisbon. His maternal family roots originate from the Beira Alta in the International Douro region of Portugal. From the beginning, Carrilho was an international child, as he is a child of mixed African and European races, and was conceived in Stockholm. Prior to his birth, his maternal grandfather was also stationed in Angola, Africa and in Goa, India, first as a major and then a coronel, as part of the Portuguese colonizing forces. However, he was also an anti-monarchic and anti-clerical Republican and some of these traces and influences can be found in Carrilho's book as for example in the passage when he states:

> Eu sou cada vez mais ateu militante, mas que acredita na tolerância entre credos. Sabendo perfeitamente que um credo tem sempre uma base de intolerância aos outros credos. No entanto quanto mais passo fronteiras e verifico que as coisas que nos unem são tantas mais do que as que nos separam mais começo a ficar impaciente com bairrismos, clubismos e nacionalismos, regionalismos e ismos que mais se assemelham a istmos, estrangulamentos cada vez mais apertados que dificultam a passagem livre de um aperto de mão a um abraço, normalmente entre pessoas tão semelhantes nas suas diferenças. (Carrilho 110)
>
> [I am more and more of a militant atheist, but one who believes in tolerance for all creeds. Knowing full well that a creed always has a fundamental intolerance for all other creeds. Nevertheless, the more I cross borders and note that the things that unite us are much more numerous than those that separate us, the more intolerant I become of parochialisms, factionalisms and nationalisms, regionalisms and isms that more closely resemble isthmuses, ever tighter strangulations that make it difficult to naturally go from a handshake to a hug among people who are so similar in their differences.]

Here we can clearly see his resistance to any type of formal system which is organized by ideology and hierarchy, whether religious or political. On the other hand, at the time of writing, Carrilho is a young man, living in an urban environment, in Lisbon, and therefore, by default, has an "ideological self-location" (Hulme and Youngs 89) which is, in his case, metropolitan; he belongs to the cultural elite, both within the country and abroad. Most notably, he illustrates regularly for the *Diário de Notícias* in Portugal, *The Independent* in the UK and *Vanity Fair* in the US.

1.2 The Source Text

An object that is at rest will stay at rest unless a force acts upon it. An object that is in motion will not change its velocity unless a force acts upon it.

Isaac Newton

The law of inertia — the idea that when an object is in motion it remains in motion, and when at rest it remains at rest — is what gives the book its title and, for Carrilho personally, in Lisbon it is a feeling that when he is there, he is at rest, has no desire to leave; however, when he is elsewhere, in motion, he has no desire to return. His fatigue with being in constant motion is visible when he writes: "Não tenho de saber o que procurar, tenho de perceber quando não procuro e acarinhar esses momentos. E isso acontece sempre que me sento e calmamente inspiro o que me rodeia, exalando um desenho." (Carrilho 119) [I don't have to know what to look for, I have to be aware of when I am not looking and caress those moments. And that always happens when I sit down, calmly inhaling my surroundings, exhaling a drawing.]

This book, *inércia* in the original (2013), *inertia* in English, is Carrilho's first venture into writing. It was both drawn and written in chronological order, but some of the countries were visited more than once, notably some of the ex-colonies, Pemba and Maputo in Mozambique, Macau in China, and Goa in India. It is a reflection of his experiences and thought processes while observing and documenting, through drawing, his various subjects during his travels. Initially, he was inspired by a desire to visit family members in some of these former Portuguese colonies, to understand the Portuguese influence in these places, intending only to, literally, draw on his experiences. Later, during the process itself, writing aligned itself with drawing to become an expression of his desire to extract himself temporarily from the grip of new media and technology, the systemic tools of globalization. Only upon completion does he realize that he was also finding an outlet for his restlessness; that he was attempting to remain in motion, when in fact he had everything he needed for self-development back home in Lisbon. In this sense, the book is at once a journey into Carrilho's mind and thought processes, and a journey through physical space; an internal as well as external journey and, as such, it works on various levels as a literary travel book. Before specifying exactly how it can be considered as such, it is useful here to review the modern concept of Travel Writing.

Despite being a notoriously difficult style to define, taking on characteristics of forms and genres as disparate as diary, letter, guidebook, essay, short story, etc., at times straddling the line between fact and fiction, memory and imagination, according to Tim Youngs, in his excellent *Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, "A near-consensus has developed that travel writing is a mixed form that feeds off other genres." (Youngs 6) More specifically, Jan Borm, who does not consider it a genre but a "[…] collective term for a variety of texts both predominantly fictional and non-fictional whose main theme is travel." (Borm 13), attempts a general definition of the travel book as: "[…] any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming or presupposing that author, narrator and principle character are but one and identical." (Borm 17) In addition, seen from the perspective of the writer/reader, or the human element within the written form, Casey Blanton remarks: "Travel books are vehicles whose main purpose is to introduce us to the other, and […] an engagement between self and the world." (Blanton xi)

So, to sum up, a travel book can be many genres or take on many forms, while at the same time maintaining its primary function of relating the narrator and reader to the 'other' encountered during the journey. For our purposes here, in addressing Carrilho's book directly, I will place it squarely in the literary tradition of diary/journal travel writing.

In her introduction to *Women, Travel Writing and Truth*, Clare Broome Saunders states that travel writing is

> […] travelogues, journalistic reports, autobiographies, diaries, letters, novels, short stories and guidebooks. Truth is at the heart of all these generic distinctions: the assumed authenticity and greater honesty of a personal diary or correspondence which records personal experiences […]. (Saunders 1)

Truth is also at the heart of how *inércia* traces Carrilho's evolution from a mere traveler to someone in fact engaging his 'self' with the world at large, as a way of questioning and discovering parts of said self which only reveal themselves at moments and through people he encounters on his journey. *inércia* belongs to a tradition that started with the late 18th century subjective turn in travel writing, wherein the writer focuses inward rather than simply recounting his observations. In Carrilho's case, it is the beginning of his journey into his own

deep engagement with his environment, and takes him around the world, and around the word (via his illustrations), and back again.

But what makes Carrilho's book not only a travel book but a 'literary' travel book? According to Carl Thompson, "Style is […] as important as content in these texts […] Often, for example, these accounts are underpinned, either explicitly or implicitly, by the mythic motif of the quest. Thus, the travel book typically begins with the narrator setting out from his or her home, either in search of some specific goal or else generally seeking adventures, new experiences and interesting stories […] the narrator undergoes important, possibly life-changing experiences, before returning home to be reintegrated into his or her own society." (Thompson 9-17)

Originally, Carrilho set out to simply visit some relatives and friends living in some of the ex-Portuguese colonies. Shortly into his journey however, he decided to document his trips and visits on Facebook as a way of keeping his other family and friends back home in Lisbon informed of his whereabouts and experiences. Not long after he started documenting, however, he began to feel a strong reaction to the fleeting and impersonal nature of such a type of digital documentation, and opted instead to write about his journey and illustrate his experiences by hand using traditional journalistic forms.

In order to arrive at his 'destination', or back at a deeper connection to himself and to what awaits him back home, Carrilho questions himself and his hyper-technological experiences along the way. He begins to veer from his original plan of posting his musings and drawings on a digital platform such as Facebook, and returns to a more analogue style in the form of his manual illustrations which are accompanied by his words.

Blanton describes this type of subjective journey thus: "Wholeness is associated with homecoming when the quest cycle is complete […] the experiences in the outer world can be "transferred" to the self that is being scrutinized, thus converting the journey into a mode of introspection." (Blanton 3) and "[…] travel writing begins at this point to emphasize the theme of self-discovery." (Blanton 21) As Carrilho himself states: "Em todos os regressos encontramos à nossa espera a identidade que costumamos vestir em casa, amarfanhada no sítio onde a deixáramos à pressa, pronta a ser sacudida e usada outra vez. Resta saber se a nudez valeu a pena." (Carrilho 117) [At every return, we find the identity we usually wear at home

waiting for us, scruffy where we left it in a hurry, ready to be shaken and worn once again. Whether the nakedness was worth it, remains to be seen.] Carrilho himself undergoes an inner transformation from the time he first departs to the final return home at the end of the book. In the beginning, he is, by his own admission, a nomad, a traveler as opposed to a tourist; someone who is focused on his travels and on his work. He purposely takes off on his adventure in order to discover new things and reconnect with his familial and cultural background; however, towards the end of the book, he begins to write more nostalgically about his home and life in Lisbon, and turns inward towards his immediate environment and towards his feeling about his own city:

> "É ao virar da esquina da minha casa que quero descobrir um recanto onde nunca fui, parar à sombra da árvore que sempre contornei. Perguntar pelas histórias que devia saber. Quero apanhar um autocarro de turista no Terreiro do Paço e sobrevoar a Baixa de helicóptero. Quero tratar Lisboa bem, falar melhor com ela, olhá-la com olhos de ver. Pensando melhor sou eu o culpado do desgaste na nossa convivência. Porque uma relação longa exige trabalho e dedicação, entrega consciente. E dura uma vida. Gasto-me em lugares que nunca perderam tempo comigo, e viro as costas à cidade que me fez." (Carrilho 117)
>
> [It's upon turning the corner of my home that I want to discover a nook in which I 've never been, pause under the shade of that tree that I always walk around. Ask about the stories I should know about. I want to catch a tourist bus at Terreiro do Paço and fly over the Baixa by helicopter. I want to treat Lisbon well, speak more kindly with her, see her with seeing eyes. The more I think of it, the decline in our interaction is my fault. Because a lasting relationship requires work and dedication, a conscious surrender. And lasts a lifetime. I waste my time in places that never spent any time on me, and I turn my back on the city that made me.]

With regards to writing style specifically, Carrilho opts for "foreignization", regularly using the lexicon of the central (English) system within the peripheral (Portuguese) system. Although the concept is generally used in translation theory, which I will explore more fully within the final section in which I discuss my own translation choices, in this case I believe it also applies to Carrilho's book. Though it is written in his own Portuguese language, he chooses to not translate certain words. An early example of this occurs right at the beginning of the text with the words "black", "heavy metal" and "ferry". (Carrilho 11) In making this choice, Carrilho opts for taking the Portuguese reader abroad into a foreign experience, or rather, bringing the foreign to the Portuguese reader. In a way, he is choosing to mix the

cultures, to open his work up to a global influence, to invite the central language system into his own peripheral culture; it remains a consistent choice throughout the text.

He also makes liberal use of infinitive verbal tenses, as in, for example, "Acordar em Maputo" [Waking up in Maputo] (Carrilho 11), which sets the initial temporal tone for the book. However, in my translation of this work, except for this initial passage where I use the gerund to convey the initial frenzy of travel, I chose to use mostly the imperative instead, for we get the sense that this is all happening as a list of things to do as if, while writing, when he is at rest, he is at the same time remembering, as well as making notes about, what to do while in motion, a somewhat fractal perspective I will further explore in the section on the author as post postmodernist writer. Further supporting this aspect of post postmodernity, is the fact that he uses his illustrations and journal entries made 'on the spot', thereby adding layers of media and meaning to his written observations, i.e. the different layers of meaning within the context of the book are themselves revealed via the different media used to create the content. By using both writing and handmade illustration, which is then digitized using new media in the form of design programs (in this case, Adobe InDesign), Carrilho is creating a "fractalized" approach to the moment he is living, one in which meaning is not assimilated and perceived simply as linear and horizontal, as in narrative, but also as experiential and vertical, as in collage.

In stylistic terms, Carrilho's book also reflects a trend in twentieth-century Travel Writing, as Hulme and Youngs point out:

> In the twentieth century, evidence of a change in the construction of travel narratives can clearly be seen in stylistic terms. Though the I-narrator still occupies a dominant position, the increasing use of dialogue in travel writing has further closed the gap between travel account and fiction, making the travel text resemble the novel much more closely. The protagonist engages in conversations that introduce a range of other characters into the narrative, and the reader is expected to believe that such conversations which apparently transcend any language barrier are recorded rather than invented. (Hulme and Youngs 235)

We can see an example of this in *inércia* starting on page 58, during a long exchange Carrilho has with a taxi driver in Macau.

Finally, as far as his tone, it is often humorous, a characteristic I shall further explore in relation to a post-colonial perspective in the second chapter below.

1.3 Objectives and Methodology of the Work-Project

It is only by a greater awareness of difference that human beings can hope to break the cycle of violence […]

Susan Bassnett, *Translation*

My objectives in translating this work were twofold. Firstly, as stated above, it was a direct request by Carrilho himself, but secondly, once I began the process, the goal became to translate the work in such a way as to appeal to a US readership. I elaborate on this latter goal below. In the third and final chapter of this work, in which I also analyze my own translation process, we shall see that, in order to translate the text properly I had to make use of various theories to anchor my choices. My theoretical framework rested primarily on Venuti's Translation Theory of Foreignization vs. Domestication and, as explained above, on the travel book as a literary text. Before delving deeper into these however, I feel it is useful to sketch the other theoretical structures or frameworks which arose during or after the translation process. Specifically, Travel Writing in the Age of Globalization and New Media, Post-colonialism, and Post Postmodernism, which I will also briefly discuss in the following chapter. My aim here is to show how Translation Studies is an interdisciplinary practice. The fact that I was confronted with such a plethora of theoretical bases with which to analyze this text confirms this perspective.

As far as the structure of this work, I have divided it into three parts, to which I have attributed suggestive titles which strictly reference the theme contained within them, as follows:

1) Chapter 1, entitled "Introduction: The Journey Begins", contains introductory information on the author and the source text, as well as my own methodology for this work-project;

2) Chapter 2, entitled "Theoretical Context: Along the Way", explores and elaborates on the theoretical bases for the body of the work, specifically with regards to the author as Travel Writer in the Age of Globalization and New Media, the Post-Colonial Author and what I have termed the Post Postmodernist Author.

3) Chapter 3, entitled "From *inércia* to *inertia*: Bridge to the New World", traces the challenges, strategies and choices I made during the process of translating this work and also contains the final Target Text in translation.

The conclusions, bibliography and original text as Annex, which follow the main body of this text, will conclude the work-project. And finally, from a more practical perspective, the translation of the book is intended for publication in the US Travel Literature market. To this end, upon completion of this work, I intend to interview some potential US publishers to gauge interest in, and the potential market value of, the book.

2. Theoretical Context: Along the Way

A travel book is like a poem in giving universal significance to a local texture.

Paul Fussell, *Abroad*

As we've seen in the introduction, Carrilho's book is the result of his journeys to some of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, Asia and India. I have established that this text is primarily a travel book, specifically a literary travel book, and defined how and why that is so, referencing the text directly. However, this *inércia* is not merely a literary travel book, but also addresses, either directly or indirectly, several current and contemporary themes, notably Globalization and New Media, Post-colonialism and what I have chosen to term Post Postmodernism. In order to get a better sense of the themes fleshing out the text, I will begin by exploring the backbone and supporting structure of the book: the travel experience as envisioned and recorded by Carrilho during his journeys.

2.1 The Author as Travel Writer in the Age of Globalization and New Media

[…]travel writing is a genre especially reflective of, and responsive to, the modern condition. We live, after all, in an era of increasing globalisation, in which mobility, travel and cross-cultural contact are facts of life, and an everyday reality, for many people.

Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing*

Throughout his personal, practical, visual and literary journeys, Carrilho is a keen

observer of himself and others. He questions his motivations, his actions and his judgements, and observes the 'other' through a lens of curiosity, compassion and humor. He also records his progress on his journeys, probing how his views of himself and the world change as he travels and records. Add to this his unique way of engaging with the outer world, via his beautiful illustrations, and we can confidently place this book within the definition of subjective Travel Writing. However, Carrilho also embodies a new type of traveler and writer particular to the age we live in, specifically, a globalized age and one in which New Media plays a role in the negotiated relationships we encounter daily, and especially when traveling. Within this world, increasingly, other meets other in a virtual environment or, if in the 'real' world, the relationship is itself 'mediated' via New Media. As, for example, in this passage: "Levantei os olhos do telefone e apanhei o jovem chinês ainda a olhar para mim, como se eu fosse o foco de maior interesse naquele instante. Todos os outros na mesa estavam no seu mundo particular, surfando como eu um mundo infinito de realidades na ponta dos dedos. Olhámo-nos nos olhos e percebi que nenhum de nós estava ali." (Carrilho 75) [I looked up from my phone and caught the young Chinese guy still looking at me, as if I were the most interesting subject at that moment. All the others at the table were in their own private worlds, surfing like me, an infinity of realities at their fingertips. We looked each other in the eye and I realized that neither of us was present.]

With regards to Travel Writing today, this passage is particularly significant because Carrilho recognizes here how technology, which ostensibly brings the world closer together, at the same time separates us as individuals; functions as a filter between true human connection. In my conversations with Carrilho he brought up this realization as the impetus for his decision to do manual illustrations to document his journey, rather than posting some digital illustrations on Facebook, which had been his original idea. This incident illustrates not only the phenomenon of technology as a potential barrier to direct human communication, but also, ultimately, the resulting paradox of a globalized world: two individuals from two different cultures using the same technology in the same location, observing each other but not connecting in any way EXCEPT for the recognition that each is absorbed in their own virtual world. The commodity is the message, not only in this one particular case, but in the world at large.

On the other hand, as far as travel and Travel Writing specifically are concerned:

> Instead of signaling the demise of travel writing, globalisation and mass tourism have led to its 'democratisation'. Not only are different kinds of people now writing travelogues (including those who were previously colonised), but the readership is also becoming more global and democratic […] travelogues can be a positive influence when writers and readers use images of otherness to reflect on their privileged cultural assumptions. (Lisle 20)

As we can see from Carrilho's experiences, this is very much a case with his own travel process and the questions he poses to himself along the way. To begin with, in his book, Carrilho recalls a distinction made between the definition of a tourist and that of a traveler (as Paul Fussell does in his book *Abroad*), and he paraphrases from the film *The Sheltering Sky* by Bernardo Bertolucci. In it, the distinction is made by the main characters thus: "A tourist is someone who thinks about going home the moment they arrive" (Kit Moreseby, *The Sheltering Sky*), "Whereas a traveler might not come back at all." (Port Moreseby, *The Sheltering Sky*).

This distinction between the traveler and the tourist is felt throughout the book and can be viewed from the perspective of contemporary consumption. "Tourists have become part of the accelerated movement of people, goods and services that is seen to be a characteristic feature of globalisation. Mike Featherstone argues that this movement is accompanied by a flow of signs and images that are present in all areas of everyday life […] with reproduced imagery becoming omnipresent." (Cronin, 2000: 84) As a Post-colonial traveler in the age of Globalization and New Media, there are events and images that both amuse and displace Carrilho. It is familiar, yet unsettling. An example of this is when he is driving to the airport with his father in Maputo, and they pass a shantytown. Carrilho observes that all along the route the houses bordering the road are painted in primary colors and covered with logos advertising for detergents and telecommunications. He writes: "O resultado é africano, mas a matéria-prima gráfica é ocidental, doutro hemisfério económico." (Carrilho 20) [The result is African, but the graphic raw material is Western, from a different economic hemisphere.] This is a prime example of the ex-colony as a rewriting of globalist Anglo-European capitalist values, NOT of a "translation" of Europe and, while the above passage certainly illustrates the effects of globalization on the travel experience, placing the focus squarely on the tourist/consumer rather than the traveler seeking out new and individual experiences, it also reflects a particular effect of the colonial project, which is that the Western colonizing forces bring into and impose upon the ex-colonies their culture, language and products. From an academic point of view:

> Broadly speaking, the aim of postcolonial studies is to comprehend, and to contest, the pernicious consequences of the vast European empires of the nineteenth and twentieth

> centuries. The European imperial project, and the global capitalism it promoted, laid the foundations of our modern, globalised world. It brought about cross-cultural contact, and the relocation of individuals and peoples, on a massive scale […] modern travel writing can yield significant insights into the ideologies and practices that sustain the current world order." (Thompson 3)

In fact, according to Hulme and Youngs, the era of globalisation in which we live today can be traced back to 1880 until 1940 right before the end of the colonial project. This process was set in motion by territorial colonialism and continues today as neo-colonial economic imperialism (Cf. Hulme and Youngs 73).

2.2 The Post-Colonial Author

More postcolonial travellers are travelling and writing back to the so-called centre, or journeying from within it.

Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*

In the above section, we explored the themes of the travel writer in the age of Globalization and New Media from a more or less general perspective. However, in Carrilho's case, part of his journey is also a quest to find his family and his country/culture abroad in the ex-colonies. Before focusing in on the specifics of his personal journey, however, it is worthwhile to give a brief description of the Portuguese colonial project that led to the steps involved in his physical journey.

The Portuguese Empire was a global empire, which began in 1488 when Bartolomeu Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. This is also where Carrilho's actual and writing journeys begin, as his first words on paper are: "André Carrilho foi ali ao Cabo das Tormentas, ver se encontrava Boa Esperança." (Carrilho6) [André Carrilho took off, to the Cape of Torments, to see if he could find Good Hope.] The empire lasted for six centuries, until the grant of sovereignty to East Timor in 2002, and spread throughout a vast number of territories on several continents. Carrilho's journey lasted for the entire year of 2012, with some periodic return to Portugal, and took him across three continents. In a limited sense, Carrilho is retracing some of the colonial project's steps, and through his eyes we can witness some of the results of this project taking shape in our own time. According to Lisle, "[…] many critics have argued that it is 'virtually impossible to consider travel writing outside the frame of postcolonialism.' […] travelogues are currently addressing their colonial past in a context of rapid globalization." (Lisle 2)

In a review of *Postcolonial Travel Writing: Critical Explorations*, Nishi Pulugurtha describes Travel Writing within the Postcolonial era and poses an interesting question:

> Travel writing is an interdisciplinary genre that, in recent times, has become an important area of study. Closely linked to issues of imperialism, diaspora, multiculturalism, nationalism, identity, gender globalization, colonialism and postcolonialism, it brings into play ideas of transculturation, the idea of the centre and the margin, border crossings, hybridity, location and displacement. Travel entails a movement away from a familiar place and location to an unfamiliar one, a new place, one that is different from one's home […] How does postcolonial travel writing represent this idea of identity, self and otherness? Can travel be a means of finding out one's identity? (Pulugurtha, 1)

The book takes Carrilho from Portugal to South Africa, then to Mozambique (Africa), Macau (China), Goa (India) and back to Portugal, with a stop in Dubai along the way. He is, in a way, retracing his family's footsteps, ostensibly to visit relatives and reconnect with them, but given his need to observe, explore, and analyze his experiences, this process easily translates into a personal quest. Tim Youngs claims that "Probably the most common kind of travel at present is the 'footsteps genre' [...] in which the author-protagonists journey in the steps of earlier travellers (ones to whom they may or may not be related)." (Youngs 184) However, just as "[…] many contemporary travel writers go to great lengths to *avoid* the imperial and patriarchal attitudes of their predecessors, opting instead for self-reflexive narratives that either foreground connections between global cultures, or use humour and self-depreciation to send up the notion of 'adventure' " (Lisle 70), Carrilho does not avoid his family and nation's colonial past, but rather chooses to be self-reflexive as he traverses the ex-colonies, circumventing direct comment except in instances addressing the Portuguese language. We can observe in the source text some examples of changes in post-colonial cultures that are typically accompanied by cultural syncretism and linguistic creolization. According to Cronin, there is a tension between what he terms horizontal and vertical travel.

> Horizontal travel is the more conventional understanding of travel as a linear progression from place to place. Vertical travel is temporary dwelling in a location for a period of time where the traveller begins to travel down into the particulars of place either in space […] or in time […] Literary travel involves these constant shifts between the macroscopic scale of the horizontal and the microscopic scale of the vertical. The sensitivity to language detail is partly then a function of the interaction between the two modes of travel." (Cronin, 2000: 19)

Some examples of this can be seen in Carrilho's charming recollection of an instance in Maputo, Mozambique, during a dinner gathering of family and friends from the various ex-colonies. There is a humorous description of Portuguese language wordplay on page 35 of the text, which I elaborate upon in the final chapter, that reflects the various misunderstandings that can arise from local interpretations and usage of the colonizing tongue. Cronin also states that "A feature of the contact zone, the areas of encounter between the colonisers and the colonised, is the predicament of translation." (Cronin, 2000:18) and, although André is not the colonizer but partly the 'product' of the colonizer, we can say that his encounters with the colonized reflect this feature, which we will explore more fully in the following chapter.

2.3 The Post Postmodernist Author

Devo estar a ter uma reacção a tudo o que nos bombardeia diariamente nos media, na Internet, nas redes sociais e afins.

André Carrilho, *inércia*

[I must be having a reaction to everything that bombards us daily in the media, on the Internet, on social networks, and the like.]

Before delving into this concept, which I have chosen to label a Post Postmodernist (as opposed to other suggested terms for the contemporary age – see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-postmodernism for a concise list of terms currently in use) aspect of Carrilho's text, I think it is useful to trace some historical steps leading from Modernism to Postmodernism and beyond, utilizing some of Carrilho's text and/or process as a basis for identification. For the sake of brevity and relevance, I have here opted to refer only to definitions which relate to culture and/or travel, and not to focus on the broader, historical or socio-economic implications of these theories.

Firstly, with regards to 'Modernism', "Martin Heidegger claimed that 'the fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture'. The implication of visual practices in travel is long established. From romantic landscape painting to the picture postcard and TV holiday programmes, travelling is often primarily projected as an activity of *seeing*." (Cronin, 2000: 81) Using Carrilho's work as an illustration, in and of itself, exemplifying this

view, his practice of drawing his impressions as he travels places him within this particular tradition of Modernity. Following Cronin's claim that "[…] travelling by the reader can take two forms, the *ocular* and the *epistemic*" (Cronin, 2000:37), I want to here point out that Carrilho, as the writer, enables this ocular experience through his illustrations. The reader need not imagine the optics (the *ocular*) through the act of reading (the *epistemic*), but can actually 'see' them through Carrilho's eyes. It is not just a matter of a multi-layer narrative perspective, but of a multimedia narrative perspective (Carrilho uses not only multiple layers of meaning, but multiple media to convey that meaning), taking a step beyond Marshall Mcluhan's "the medium is the message". What gives Carrilho's book the 'post' in post postmodernism are the attempts to find meaning outside of the medium: Carrilho uses the postmodern tools of mixed media to the tell the story, i.e. through "audio/literary visual", but the medium is no longer the message in and of itself, the medium simply enhances the dissemination of the message.

Another relevant definition of Modernism, or Modernity, is as follows: "Modernity is characterised by the exponential growth in travel and movement of people around the globe." (Cronin, 2000: 1) Here we find a bridge between the position of the travel writer and what Travel Writing signifies in terms of the modern condition of globalization and, in particular, that of the modern travel writer. Another earlier definition:

> Modernity is a deeply contested term, but its original form – as Baudelaire´s *modernité*, dating from an 1863 essay – ties it closely to notions of movement and individuality which, in the aristocratic figure of the *fláneur*, or stroller, stand out against the democratisation of travel […] in the late nineteenth century […] literary writers were also beginning to travel and to write about their travels […] Travel writing was becoming travel *literature* and was therefore taken with a new seriousness […]. (Hulme and Youngs 7)

Carrilho seems to identify more with the latter (traveler), but is somewhat in between, both as traveler and as someone who straddles cultures as a type of cultural tourist. He makes an attempt to describe why in this passage:

> Luto com esses dois rótulos e tento encaixar-me num deles. Por mais que os estique, não dá. Ambos têm algo que eu não tenho: disponibilidade para o que encontram no caminho. A minha é limitada, continuo a trabalhar, muitas vezes não tenho tempo para olhar a paisagem. Trato os sítios por onde passo como se fossem a minha casa, sem obrigações de visitar o monumento mais próximo. Sem olhar para um calendário ou para um guia de viagem. Quando muito serei um nómada. Esse não faz turismo nem viaja. A sua casa está espraiada, estica-se por alguns sítios familiares. E volta a eles regularmente, ao sabor dos elementos. (Nota para cartoon: um nómada a fazer turismo. Deve haver uma piada aí algures.) **(**Carrilho 31)

> [I struggle with both those labels and I try to fit into one of them. No matter how much I stretch them, it doesn´t work. They both have something I don´t have: openness to whatever crosses their path. Mine is limited, I keep working, often I don´t have the time to look at the landscape. I treat the places I visit like my home, with no obligation to visit the nearest monument. Without looking at a calendar or a tourist guide. If anything, I´m a nomad. That´s neither a tourist nor a traveler. His home is expansive, it stretches across some familiar sites. And he returns to them regularly, goes where the wind blows. (Idea for a cartoon: a nomad as a tourist. There must be a joke in there somewhere.)]

He seems to be searching for some kind of non-religious rebirth, which at times feels spiritual nonetheless, and this journey/quest is an attempt to answer some questions for himself. Hulme puts it this way: "As the earth's wildernesses get paved over, travel writing increasingly emphasizes an inner journey, often merging imperceptibly into memoir." (Hulme and Youngs 94)

Moving along towards Postmodernism: "With its emphasis on fragmentation, unexpected juxtapositions and abrupt jumps from one image to another, meanwhile, much Modernist literature and art bears the imprint of the faster lifestyle and the disorienting kinesis that is seemingly characteristic of modernity. (Thompson 57) Carrilho "fractalizes" or layers his experience using both imagery and language. Carrilho uses his text to accompany his illustrations, as an integral part of them, for self-referentiality, and to add fragmentariness (Cf. Youngs 186-187) In other words, in Carrilho's case, it is the non-verbal signs in the form of illustrations that are interpreted into verbal signs. Just as Cronin states:

> […] the traveller may actively seek exile from language as a means of communicative rebirth. The conventional interpretive grid of language is abandoned for other ways of knowing, channeled through taste, touch, vision, smell and (non-verbal) sound. The primacy of the visual, often seen as a dominant feature of globalisation, is examined in its implications for intersemiotic travel experience and for the spread of one global language. (Cronin, 2000:3)

So, to recap, the book's tracking from Modernism to 'Post' Postmodernism is as follows: Modernism alienated the human from its own inner reality by providing images to focus on, and then Postmodernism further fractalized and fractured the human via multimedia and multilayered realities. So how do we go from here to our current era of Post Postmodernism? Tim Youngs comments:

> There is a line to be traced here from Thoreau and his fellow transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, to D.H. Lawrence, with their shared anxiety that modern industrialism has

> alienated us from our souls and from the life that really matters […] Such an attitude is linked with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century manifestations of primitivism and presages the reaction against modernity that we see in twentieth- and twenty-first century nostalgia for slower travel and a more direct experience of nature. (Youngs 64).

As we will see, *inércia* exemplifies this new type of nostalgia by rejecting the current trend of relying solely on technology to form a narrative impression.

There are today other real-world examples of this reaction, as exemplified by a Swiss company called Punkt., which aims to fill the gap between today's hyper-technology and old technology, focusing on simpler protoypes for electronics and recommending the reading of actual as opposed to e-books. Their site also features a "digital detox journal." Its founder states in the "about" page: "Today's world is consumed with technology and I think we are too distracted by it in day-to-day life. I founded Punkt. to offer a viable alternative for those feeling overwhelmed by the advanced technologies that have pervaded modern lifestyles. Punkt. is about using technology to help us adopt good habits for less distracted lives." (Petter Neby)

As stated previously, one of the main impetuses for Carrilho's decision to write this book was the author's fatigue with all things media and social network. This part of his process begins with him posting impressions on Facebook, first the illustrations, then the kernels to the written text. Both the drawing and the writing were reactions against Instagram and 'selfies'. According to Carrilho, drawing and writing force you to spend time in the moment, it is a reaction against the distancing from the moment via technology. Drawing forces you to be there with yourself, and his writing arose as a result of using New Media, instigated by Facebook. Both drawing and writing are extremely personal but can be shared with others; however, Carrilho attributes more value to the hand-drawn and written work than to the endless stream of photos or posts on social media – he is not bound by the creative limitations of social media. It is also a reaction against the current media tools being used, to everyone being an artist, to the loss of artists' rights, an argument in favor of design, drawing, writing, etc. not being able to be appropriated – a reaction against appropriation of the artist's work. In my understanding, this places *inércia* squarely in the realm of the 'Post' Postmodern, as it is a rejection of the postmodernist view and approach to art in general and documentation in particular. The reaction against such a fragmentation; the desire for unification of a sort, whether religious, spiritual or, in Carrilho's case, secular and atheistic. Further, with regards to travel itself,

> […] modernism and postmodernism have helped undermine the authority of a single narrative perspective […] Innovations in technologies of travel made people more aware of how their experiences were affected by the mode of transport. This in turn resulted in a narrative self-consciousness about how they travelled previously and now. Not infrequently, texts go beyond comment on the means of travel and reflect on the appropriateness of the literary vehicle itself. (Youngs 68-69)

One specific manifestation of this reaction comes in the form of several passages in the book which relate directly to jet travel. Planes "[…] and films frame the world and, in a profoundly ambiguous sense (departure/distance), travel becomes an act of separation." (Cronin, 2000: 83) When Carrilho flies, his being is shut in his own world looking out of or making use of technological 'windows'. One example, is looking out of the airplane window that separates him from the world, another is the desire to connect, as in the passage where he regrets using the seat separator to block out the nun sitting next to him (Carrilho 66 - 67).

Finally, another feature of the 'post' postmodern condition, is that "[…] a journey often becomes a dialogue between the inner and the outer, between our emotional necessity and the reality of the external world." (Youngs 112), i.e. the Self vs. the World. Bringing the self into alignment with the outer world is a reaction against the fragmentariness of Postmodernism. As we've established earlier, Carrilho's journeys represent a type of retracing of his family's footsteps and, as such, a personal quest wherein his emotional necessities are in alignment with his physical journeys. The journeys may be

> […] spiritual or material, pacific or martial, solitary or collective, outward into the world or inward into the self. Travellers strive for victory – over aspects of themselves or over others. They search for enlightenment; for knowledge of other people, societies, and culture, of flora, fauna and geology […] they pursue leisure, sex, self-improvement; they aim to find spiritual reward or psychological repair in enactments of their inner journey […] (Youngs 87).

As a whole, *inércia* touches upon all of these, and brings us all on the journey with it. It is not only Carrilho who travels, but the reader and, as we shall see, this translator, who embark on the journey with him.

3. From *inércia* to *inertia*: Bridge to the New World

3.1 Challenges, Strategies and Choices of the Translator

The implicit purpose of translation is to make the 'original' text travel.

Michael Cronin, *Across the Lines: Travel, Language, Translation*

The translation of Carrilho's book is from mainland (Continental or European) Portuguese into American English, these being the languages and cultures within which I grew up and with which I am, therefore, most familiar. Though both of the main forms of English — British and American — are relatively uniform, there are some differences, such as the spelling of "travelling" with two "l's" (British) versus "traveling" with one "l" (American), etc. Unless I am quoting a reference that utilizes the British form, the translation and this companion text are written with an American target readership in mind. Beyond the grammatical differences, however, in my case in particular, there is also the question of the difference between cultures. As Michael Cronin says:

> The translating agent, like the traveller straddles the borderline between cultures. A nomadic theory of translation proposes the translator-nomad as an emblematic figure of (post)modernity by demonstrating what translation can tell us about nomadism and what nomadism can tell us about translation and how both impinge on contemporary concerns with identity. (Cronin, 2000: 2)

Though I am not, in the strictest sense, a "nomad", I have always considered myself such, given the constant back and forth travel between Portugal and the US, as well as some more extended sojourns in Portugal, for example, when I spent 2 years from the ages of 10 to 12 years living in Portugal and attending Portuguese grammar school, as well as later on, for 8 months as an adult. In addition, my own impulse has always been that of a traveler (as opposed to tourist), and I have traveled independently and extensively for most of my adult life. Though I always have a pre-destined "home" to return to, in fact I have always considered myself a cultural nomad. It is no wonder then, that I was early on attracted to languages in general, and to the idea of translation specifically. In fact, as a young child of immigrants, one of my first memories of my new home in the US was of translating as well as I could for my parents, who did not speak English and who relied on me, and my limited childhood English, for support. As a child, I learned the language quickly and just as quickly became my parents' translator and interpreter as they struggled to adapt to our new cultural and linguistic environment. Thus,

I was very early on not only attracted to, but in a way forced to, delve into the world of the two languages. However, this state extends beyond language and into a translation between cultures as well. My culture of origin has its roots in a Portuguese rural, agricultural environment, and a direct connection to the land and to nature in general, whereas my introduction to my family's adopted culture was almost diametrically opposed to that. We moved in 1972 to Jamaica, Queens, a relatively diverse neighborhood at the time, but which nonetheless was primarily African-American and, in a way, already 'ghettoized'. I was, for example, the only white girl in my local grammar school for most of my time there. Also, it was a definite concrete jungle, with everything that goes along with that specific context. From bunny rabbits and meals by the fire, to ghetto blasters and playing in the fire hydrants. It would have been a definite cultural shock for anyone, but for a child of 4, it was an amazing adventure and I managed to absorb and thrive within all that the new world had to offer. I did; however, suffer some initial humiliations due to my lack of language skills. In kindergarten, one of my memories is of being scolded for stealing paint from another child's easel, as I didn't know how to ask for it. This incident instilled in me a determination to always attempt to learn, or at least communicate, as best I could, in whatever language I was presented with during my travels. As a result of this early exposure and attraction to language and culture, I chose for my undergraduate studies the field of languages and literatures, specializing in French and German Literature in the original languages. In addition to these I have also studied Russian, Italian, Spanish and Czech at various points in my life. Though I am not fluent in all of them, they allow me to communicate well in almost every part of the world which I might visit on my travels. However, American English and the American experience are the domain I am most familiar with, and fluent in.

One specific characteristic of the American experience, is that the American audience has always been fascinated with the road trip, and hence the road trip literary travel book genre. For example, the works of Mark Twain and Jack Kerouac, works which have, for their part, traveled the world through translation.

> John Steinbeck declares in *Travels With Charley* that Americans descended from those who moved: those who left Europe, those who were forced to leave Africa, and those who came in search of a better life. It makes sense that we would be travelers. Every American hungers to move," he writes. "But most of us can't just pack up and leave […] (Smithsonian magazine online article)

Though today's audience is very different from that of Steinbeck's time, given the easy access to international information and virtual travel, the American today still hungers for that freedom of movement and still travels widely. A quick search on Wikipedia yielded a list of 50 titles under "American Travel Books". A subsequent quick scan of the list revealed that I was familiar with exactly 0 of those titles. Which led to the realization that Travel Writing is not a genre generally taught in the American educational system. Americans have tendency to look inward, and what travel books we are most familiar with – for example Jack Kerouac's *On The Road* – are generally within the road trip genre, especially the road trip across the vast American continent, and specifically the road trip across the United States in search of the American experience. Today, it is difficult to gauge what importance Travel Writing in generally might have for the American public; however, Carrilho's book, while not taking place in the US, and while not a 'road' trip book per se, could be called an 'air' trip book, following some of the genre's predecessors, and is well placed in time to have some success in attracting the curiosity of the American public as it is about Portugal and its colonies, by a Portuguese author, at a time when Portugal is extremely popular as a destination for Americans. It always has been to a small sector of the population – retirees, etc., – but today it is impossible to mention where I am from originally, when I am in the US, without being grilled for information. In the past, people used to ask me if Portugal was a part of Spain, but today everyone not only knows where it is, but is counting the days until they are able to visit. And the market itself is a rapidly expanding one, as interest in Portugal and Lisbon, and in Portuguese culture generally, is at an all-time high in the US. Not a day goes by when I don't hear from an American friend or stranger expressing interest in visiting Portugal, and Lisbon in particular.

In addition to that, in taking on the responsibility of translator of Carrilho's book, I am able to draw upon not only my knowledge of American English, but also of my experiences as traveler/nomad and literary scholar, and put myself in his shoes, so to speak, when confronting this particular translation experience. And so, it is not by chance, given my life experience, that I currently find myself interested in Translation Studies.

At this moment, there is an ever-increasing interest in Translation Studies with regards to Travel Writing, as it is recognized as a particularly fertile and productive genre for applying the analytical instruments of this interdiscipline. Susan Bassnett highlights the necessity of paying more attention to travel narratives, given that there are many similarities between the

traveler and the translator: “The travel writer and the translator are major elements in shaping the perspective one culture has of another, and it is interesting that so little research should have been undertaken to date on the relationship between travel and translation." (Bassnett 2007: 23) For a brief survey on this topic, we can turn to Loredana Polezzi’s entry, "Mobility", from the second edition of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*:

> […] travellers and translators have, for a long time, played the role of intermediaries between cultures […] This type of work is also typical of a tendency for studies in the interconnected history of travel, travel writing and translation to combine, at a methodological level, the analysis of micro-and macro-textual features [...] a complex web of travelling images and multiple refractions which often involve several layers of writing, Rewriting and Other, an examination of the foreign travel accounts translated by a culture at any particular point in time, of the Strategies adopted by the translators, and of the marketing choices selected by publishers to promote these texts is potentially revealing of wider cultural trends. (Polezzi 173-174)

The first challenge I faced was the format of the book. I received the file in PDF form and it included numerous images; the drawings central to the text. I first had to convert from PDF into Word, then import into Wordfast (online TM tool), then export the word document with a PDF and convert back into a PDF format, all the while maintaining the proper structure. With Carrilho’s help, using Adobe InDesign, I was able to format the translation to look identical to the original. Also, the title and credits pages are images, so, again with Carrilho’s help, I added some new images with the English versions to the final translated text.

The second major challenge I faced was my thus far limited knowledge of Portuguese vocabulary, which is extensive and required frequent dictionary usage and research in order to be faithful to some of the nuances and subtleties of the language. I opted to use endnotes rather than footnotes in the final version to explain certain language concepts, vocabulary, names of places, etc., rather than translating them, for example to explain things such as *fado*, etc…This choice was made to preserve the aesthetic look of the original.

As for the translation and the translation process themselves, on a broader level I chose to follow Lawrence Venuti’s concept of foreignization versus domestication. As a product of both cultures, and despite, as previously mentioned, having a deficit in the Portuguese language as compared to American, I was fortunate to be able to travel back and forth throughout my life, from the time I was 4 years old, and so to easily straddle the two. With regards to this work, “translation as an activity is always doubly contextualized since the text has a position

in two cultures […] Contextual knowledge of both source and target systems was therefore deemed to be as important as linguistic competence, possibly even more so." (Bassnett, 2014: 30-31) This is directly applicable to me as a Portuguese-American living and working in both contexts. I therefore had to make a choice in how I approached the text and the target reader. Did I want to highlight the country and culture of my birth, or did I want to honor my adopted country and culture by tailoring the translation in such a way as to erase the cultural specifics of the original and make it a more 'friendly' read for an American? In contemplating this choice, I had to appeal to my broader view of the world and so, my choice was to opt for "foreignization" which, according to Lawrence Venuti, enables the translation process to reveal and give voice to the source text's culture, preserving its meaning and foreignness in the target-language text. In this way, the "foreignness" of the source culture is preserved and resists the target culture's domination. In this age of globalization, I believe it is important to preserve and give voice to as many "peripheral" languages and cultures as possible, and to resist the overall dominant tendency to standardize everything from language to gastronomy to the very experience of the tourist, seeking all the familiar "comforts" of home while abroad.

As Venuti describes it, foreignization is a choice by which a translator takes the target reader back to the source culture, rather than "domesticating" the text for a foreign readership. It is a form of resistance to the dominance of the central, Anglo-American target cultures in favor of giving a voice to the peripheral cultures being translated.

This choice was made in opposition to the concept of "domestication" in translation:

> Issues of 'domestication' and 'foreignization' were […] implicit in Schleiermacher´s question of whether the author should be brought closer to the reader or vice-versa. This 'domesticating' method has been described by Lawrence Venuti as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language cultural values, bringing the author back home", while the foreignization approach constituted an "ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad." Domestication also involved an actualizing approach which adapted the translated text to the values and norms of the target culture, while 'foreignization' sustained the socio-historical differences that characterized the source text, thus enabling readers to gain insight into the source culture and ideology. As Venuti cogently argues, foreignization can act not only as a form of resistance against ethnocentrism, racism, and imperialism, but also as a form of resistance to textual exclusion by domestic literary canons. (Martin and Pickford 10-11)

According to Susan Bassnett, "Venuti's position is that this kind of translation not only erases signs of the foreign in a text, but also affirms a belief in the superiority of English." (Bassnett, 2014: 14) and goes on to advise that "what the translator should do is remind the

reader that the world of the original was a different world" (Bassnett, 2014: 17). This has been my aim throughout the translation process and my choices are a reflection of that aim, as for example, when on page 22 of Carrilho's book he refers to 'A1', I specify in my translation that it is the A1 highway rather than substituting it for an American version or making it a generic, nameless road or highway. The intention here is to bring the reader back to the original country and its specifics, reminding them of the fact that they are reading a travelogue by a foreign writer from a foreign country.

With regards to cultural references, verb tenses, etc., Cronin states: "Lexical differences, figurative exuberance, word play, hyperbole, euphemism and accent are so many strategies of estrangement that make for a space of mediation and interpretation […] the encounter with different varieties of the traveller's own language creates an even sharper sense of specific linguistic identity." (Cronin 2000: 16) An example of word-play can be found in the following passage from Carrilho's book:

> "É cocó." O brasileiro está baralhado. "Como, cocó? É galinha?" A mesa explode, talheres e louças tilintam de riso. Sirvo-me de mais BSE e vou em seu auxílio. "Não, é cocó! Há o chichi e há o cocó. Como é no Brasil?" Os seus olhos abrem-se num misto de excitação e reconhecimento. Mas que espanto. "O que nós temos é cocô!!! Cocó é o que a galinha fala!" Digo-lhe que outro dia comi um belo frango de coco. Ele não cabe em si de contente. "Vivi anos em Portugal e só agora aprendi uma nova palavra. Cocó!" A noite está ganha. Torna-se evidente na sua alegria: sem cocó a vida seria uma merda. (Carrilho 35)

> ["It's cocó." The Brazilian is confused. "What do you mean by cocó? Is it a chicken?" The table erupts, silverware and dishes tinkle with laughter. I pour myself some more BSE wine and come to the rescue. "No, it´s cocó! There is pee pee and there is cocó. What is it in Brazil?" His eyes open wide with a mixture of excitement and recognition. What a surprise. "What we have is cocô!!!!! Cocó is what chickens say!" I tell him that the other day I had a delicious coco(nut) chicken. He can't contain his happiness. "I lived in Portugal for years and just now learned a new word. Cocó!" The night is a success. It´s obvious from his joy: without cocó life would be shit.]

Here I opted not to translate the words in play: "cocó" and "cocô", as the word-play would be lost in translation. Instead I defined them in the endnotes that conclude my translation (see chapter 3, section 3.1), through which I also make myself visible and heard as a translator Within the translation itself, the endnotes are signaled by roman numerals in superscript.

Occasionally, I chose to use the gerund (ex: "Waking up in Maputo…") after a conversation with the author. It implies the frenzy of continuous movement, not a finished action; he is always in motion, at the same time, he is observing himself acting, and narrating

his own actions. For the most part, however, I use the present tense: "The use of the present tense and the ever-extended syntax combine to create a sense of immediacy, activity, and bewildering excess." (Hulme and Youngs 202) Carrilho mostly uses the present tense in his original text, and I opted to remain faithful to him in this regard. As the quote above suggests, this creates a sense of frenzy, such as one might experience during an extended travel itinerary to various locations around the globe.

I also chose to italicize the foreign (Portuguese) words in reverse. Just as Carrilho opts for foreignization and italicizes English words rather than translating them, I also chose to italicize Portuguese words rather than translating and, as previously stated, have added endnotes where needed and appropriate. In a sense, I reversed Carrilho's approach of bringing the foreign into the Portuguese culture, and opted to bring the Portuguese into the so-called foreign.

3.2 The Target Text: *inertia*

INERTIA
André Carrilho

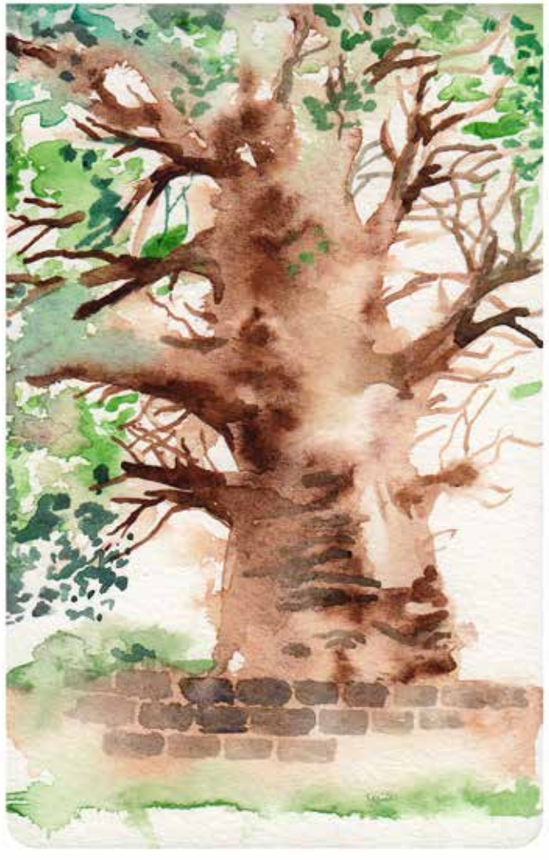
INÉRTIA

André Carrilho

Keep a diary, someday it may keep you

Mae West

André Carrilho took off, to the Cape of Torments, to see if he could find Good Hope.



Embondeiro, Pemba, Mozambique 20 Jan 2012

Wimbe Beach, Pemba, Mozambique 21 Jan 2012

Sarah's Porch, Pemba, Mozambique 23 Jan 2012

Waking up in maputo after a night at Gil Vicente[i], listening to a *black*[ii] guitarist playing *heavy metal*, a totally drunk genius kid singing *soul*, a bassist MC, stoned out of his mind, and a true drummer, a virtuoso. Mental note, this will be a regular resting spot. Packing bag and taking off to Johannesburg, waiting, then Hong Kong, transferring to *ferry*, and Macau, 20 something hours, a good film and two bad ones after departure. Showing up at a ceremonial dinner for the Macau Literary Festival, chatting with distinguished Portuguese writers (names withheld to protect their privacy) followed by a Fado[iii] concert. Missing the motherland. Detour of Portuguese writers to the Bellini in the Venetian, which is now the Playboy Club, drinking Carlsberg served by girls with bunny ears and bunny tails to the sound of Prince and "I Will Survive", played by a group of imported American singers and musicians, multifaceted in their inconsequential talents.

Taxi home, thinking that something fundamental has changed in one's perception of the world.

Lying on the sand, rocked by the gentle night sea air, the fireflies are stars with hidden intentions.

Ten meters deep, the coral floor ends, dropping suddenly. Ahead, an enormous wall of attentive eyes and silvery reflections waiting, a challenge. We advance and the wall moves around us, granular, transforming itself into a perfect cupola, surrounding us, keeping a safe distance. Using the flow of air in our lungs, we control the flotation in order to stay still. There we remain, a silent dialogue of instincts, inside a giant bubble of living beings. Biology, science, research, radical sport... It's all good. But architects, poets and philosophers also belong here.

One improvises. On the way to the airport, the road is flanked by shanty towns. The facades, painted in primary, garish colors, going by quickly, and out of the corner of the eye we can make out *slogans* and familiar nouns. It's clear: detergent brands and telecommunications operators pay the residents who are lucky enough to inhabit a wall facing the road, and paint it with logos and ads. The result is African, but the graphic raw material is Western, from another economic hemisphere.

"You see? It was here." My father takes his hand off the wheel and points to a darker patch of asphalt in the middle of the road, before driving over it without slowing down. I remember what he told me yesterday during lunch.

Last year, some raised the price of bread and others, higher in number, took to the streets. They barricaded the streets, lit tires on fire. "But do tires burn?" "Of course, they are made of fuel; you set them on fire and they just burn." (One of the problems with growing up in a technology consuming society, is the perpetual ignorance of what exactly things are made of. Onward.) The powers that could, retaliated with what they had, and on hand was tear gas, a dispersal weapon. Its damage can be minimized by washing the face with water. For a few days, however, nobody moved and a new business sprung up. You started seeing people with tubs of water on the side of the road. For five bucks you could wash your face, wipe away the gas tears and go back to the insurrection.

Once at the airport, we decide to wrap the bag in protective cellophane, to prevent theft, before checking it. At the end, the *check-in* guy puts a bright red ribbon on it, for no apparent reason. Of course, it is stamped with the logo of the largest telecommunications operator in the country.

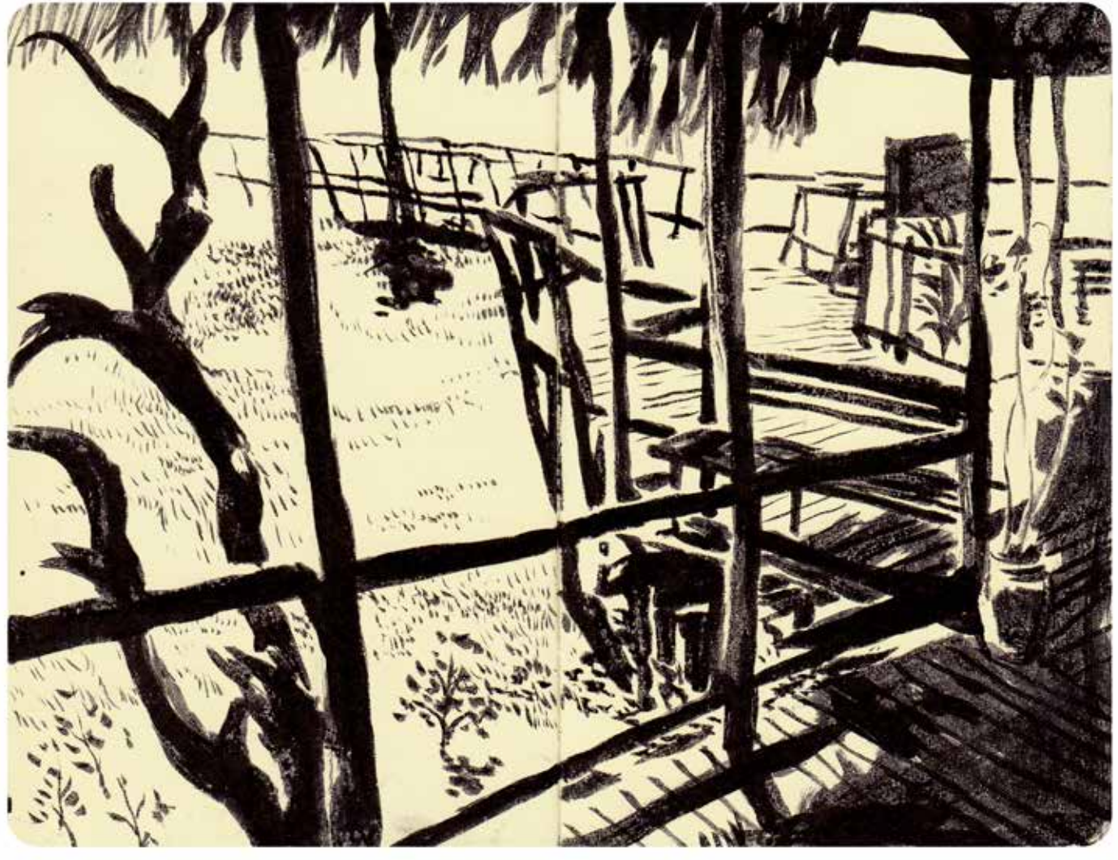
In Mozambique, even the peace of mind is sponsored.

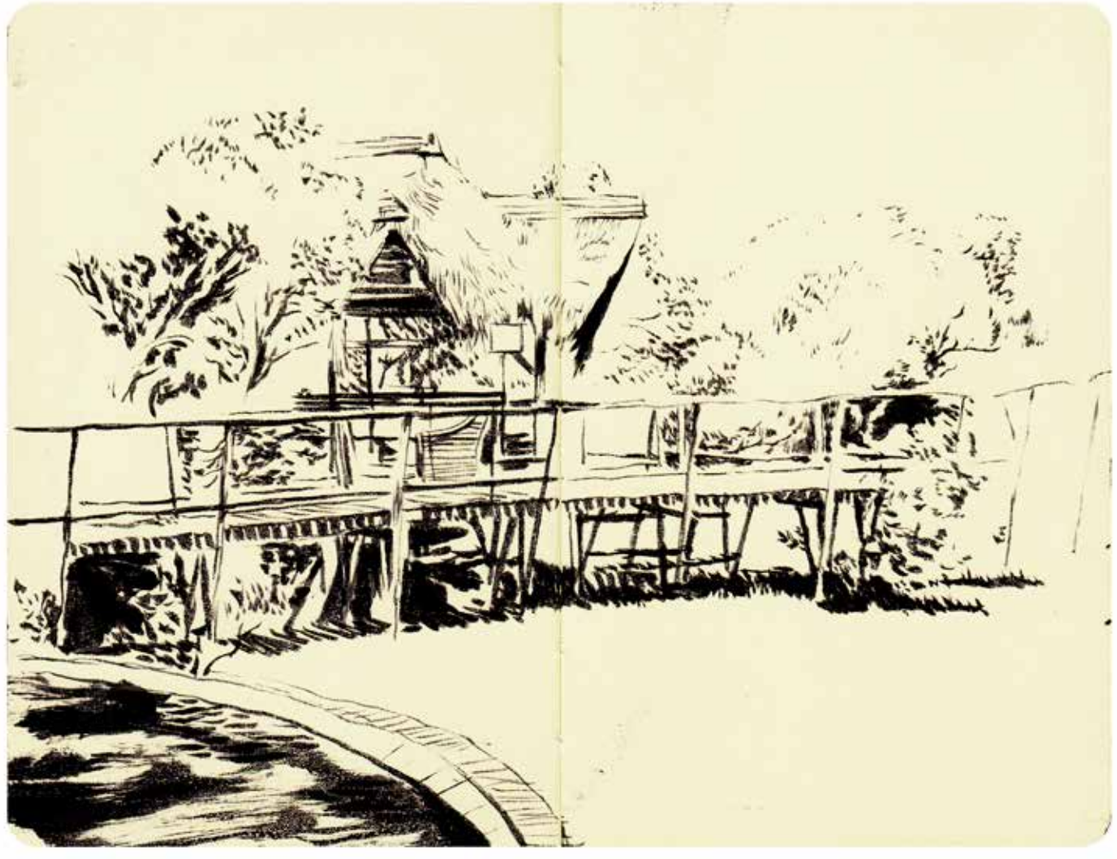
This time it was different. A beach as far as the eye can see, scalded by the sun and the sea, wavy, robust. Waiting for us, in the distance, at the water's edge, is an inflatable speedboat with two motors. We are two female instructors, a group of two men and a woman, and me.

The more experienced of the instructors, flanked by her colleague, two young, blond women with South African accents, both explain some of the procedures in English, and the path we will be following. Picking up a crumpled book containing pictures of marine life, one of them points out the portraits of the beings we might encounter. "It is better not to touch these four here under any circumstances, they are poisonous." This interests me. "And what happens if we get stung?" "Well, this one here" – she points to the ugliest one, it doesn't even look like a fish, more like a boulder – "if it stings you, you will die in seven seconds." The other one also knows a few things. She shows us a fish that doesn't beat around the bush, it has red and white stingers. "With this one you might survive, but it's not likely. You will die in a day or two." We laugh. I ask myself which would be the stupidest way to die, stung by a sub-aquatic animal in the Indian Ocean or in a car, on the A1, the main highway heading from Lisbon to Porto. And which is the most statistically probable. The A1 highway, of course. Definitely the stupidest of the two.

The woman from the group of three asks the obvious question: "Can't we go look at some sharks instead?"

Underwater we follow the leader, who carries the floating signal cable. The other one follows us vigilantly. I try to take some photos, but it's not easy. I am not yet on automatic, lots to think about and must stay alert. Equalize the ears, regulate the air in the lungs to maintain the flotation level, don't climb too much, don't touch anything, breathe regularly, ignore a slight cramp, don't let the group out of sight, deal with the water entering the goggles, look at that fish, hold on, this goes up now, let's see how much air remains... I focus on a small group of fish that looks undecided, it goes sideways, from one direction to the other. The instructor had warned us, in this spot the water imprints the pendular motion of the waves onto everything. I for one was suspicious, trying to fix my position in relation to the ground, wasting energy and precious oxygen. The fish, wiser than me, let themselves go, that way, this way, that way, this way. They're right, I relax and join the waltz. Just as when painting a watercolor, it is best to let the water decide. I may never become a fish, but I will learn to be like ink.





It had to be, it's always like that, infuriating. I'm in a docu- mentation frenzy, photographs, drawings, videos, texts. For this madness I found a method, a logic, which would be boring to explain. Suffice it to say, that the practical result is to film all the take-offs and landings of the planes I take. I put the phone up to the window and record. I cast the net to see if I catch anything interesting. And the other day I lost a very large fish, about this big!

It was more like a school of fish. An enormous one, of people. We landed in Inhambane, after a layover in Vilanculos, with no particular incident to report. On the runway, heading towards the apron, I decide to stop filming. A landscape like countless others, asphalt on the runway, the usual grass, the plane wing I'd been filming the entire trip to take my mind off the condition it was in, you see. I put away the phone and we begin to turn a corner, tight, abrupt. And as it turns with the plane, all of a sudden the window reveals our destination terminal. In front of the building stands what seems to be the entire city. A compact wall of people bordering the asphalt, some singing, others dancing, here a group dressed in white, there another in red, all looking at us, bands, schools, peoples. A reception worthy of a high rank.

The plane is small, a prop plane, doesn't have classes. Who is this pageant for? The man in the first seat, two seats in front of me, gets up. He is wearing a suit and tie, anachronistic, I should have guessed. The plane door opens, letting in heat, music and shouts. The man exits and none of the other passengers move. I don't want to be next, I am petrified of the spotlight. But I guess I have no choice. Most people will not exit the plane, which is returning to Maputo. This stopover is only for a few minutes.

I walk down the steps of the plane with two other women and the crowd looks on, quieter now. There is a line which the people welcoming us will not cross, the edge of the runway asphalt. As long as I am stepping on it, I am under their gaze, the focus of their attention. The whites of their eyes follow me, dissecting.

I don't know what the dignitary they were waiting for thought, but I understood. In Inhambane, as in many other places, in order to arrive and become a part of the landscape you have to get off the asphalt as soon as possible, and step onto the dirt.

There Was That Film By Bertolucci, *The Sheltering Sky*, based on the book by Paul Bowles. John Malkovich, Debra Winger. There's a moment in which one of them speaks of the difference between a tourist and a traveler. "A tourist knows when to return home, a traveler doesn't". Or something like that. I struggle with both those labels and I try to fit into one of them. No matter how much I stretch them, it doesn't work. They both have something I don't have: openness to whatever crosses their path. Mine is limited, I keep working, often I don't have the time to look at the landscape. I treat the places I visit like my home, with no obligation to visit the nearest monument. Without looking at a calendar or a travel guide.

If anything, I'm a nomad. That's neither a tourist nor a traveler. His home is expansive, it stretches across some familiar sites. And he returns to them regularly, goes where the wind blows. (Idea for a *cartoon*: a nomad as a tourist. There must be a joke in there somewhere.)

In the hustle and bustle of transition, many times I don't notice things I should. Drawing helps me to stop and observe, gives me time with my surroundings. Contains a tinge of meditation. I used to believe that you either lived or you documented what you lived, that the act of stopping to draw or take a photograph would sever the connection to any experience. It's different now. While drawing, my gaze is a bit deeper. I stop everything, sit with whatever surrounds me and take it in.

I don't think of anything else. I assure myself that what is committed to paper is a memory, more enduring than others.

I HAVE TO PAY THE BILL, AND I AM ALONE WITH THE RECEPTIONIST, both of us temporarily held hostage to my card, the network, technology. I need a pen to sign the slip. He breaks the silence. "Are you Portuguese?" I am always surprised by the question, I thought it was obvious. "Yes I am." "May I ask you a question?" There's a certain diffidence in his approach, as if he were going to reveal something intimate. "Do you say can I borrow a *caneta emprestada*?" or can I borrow a *caneta emprestado*?"[iv] Yeah, I always forget that this thing, the "*comunidade de países de língua portuguesa*" (CPLP - Community of Countries of the Portuguese Language)[v] is a construct that requires maintenance. In this region of Mozambique, Portuguese is the second language. The first is the indigenous language, which varies within the territories of each people, indifferent to the borders made up by whites. Those that work in hotels have to learn the language of the visitors, whether or not they are countrymen.

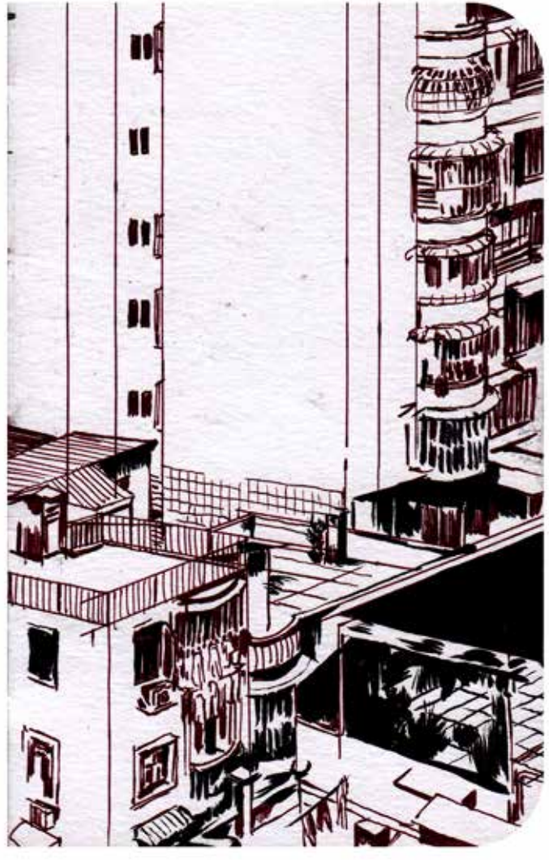
On the way to the airport, the driver starts chatting. It must be one of those days. He asks me if I liked the Flamingo and if it was my first time. I say very much and yes, and I add that it won't be the last. "You know, right now the tide is not very high, that's when it is even more beautiful." I'm confused. "But wasn't it high this morning?" "Yes, but last week it was higher, and this week it got lower. Which means that next week it will rise again, until it is higher. It keeps changing." I ask myself if it has to do with the lunar cycle, I'd never thought of that.

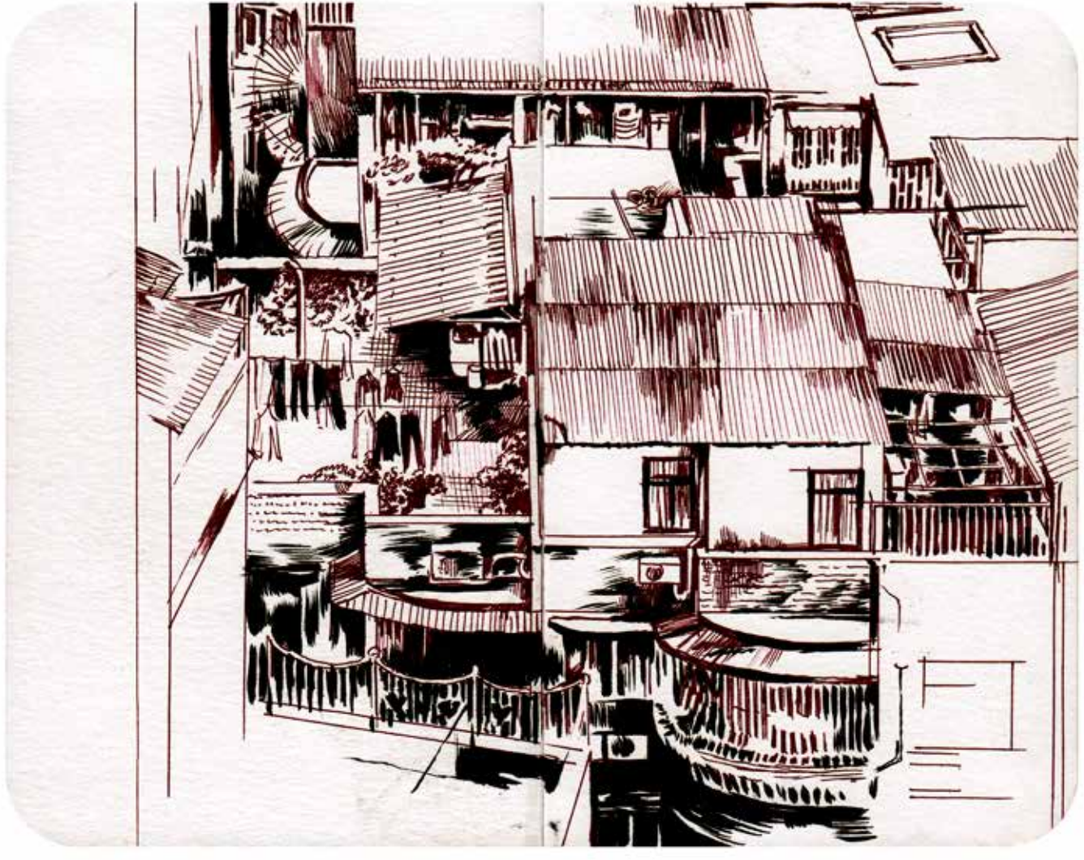
He also suspects that it has something to do with the Moon, after all we are speaking about tides. "When it's like that, the water stays up here, very close to the ground, forty centimeters, and everything is even more beautiful." It must be true, I can imagine the footbridges and porches, opening a path at sea level, creating a slight optical illusion. Now I really must come back. Call me petulant, but I can already imagine myself walking on water.

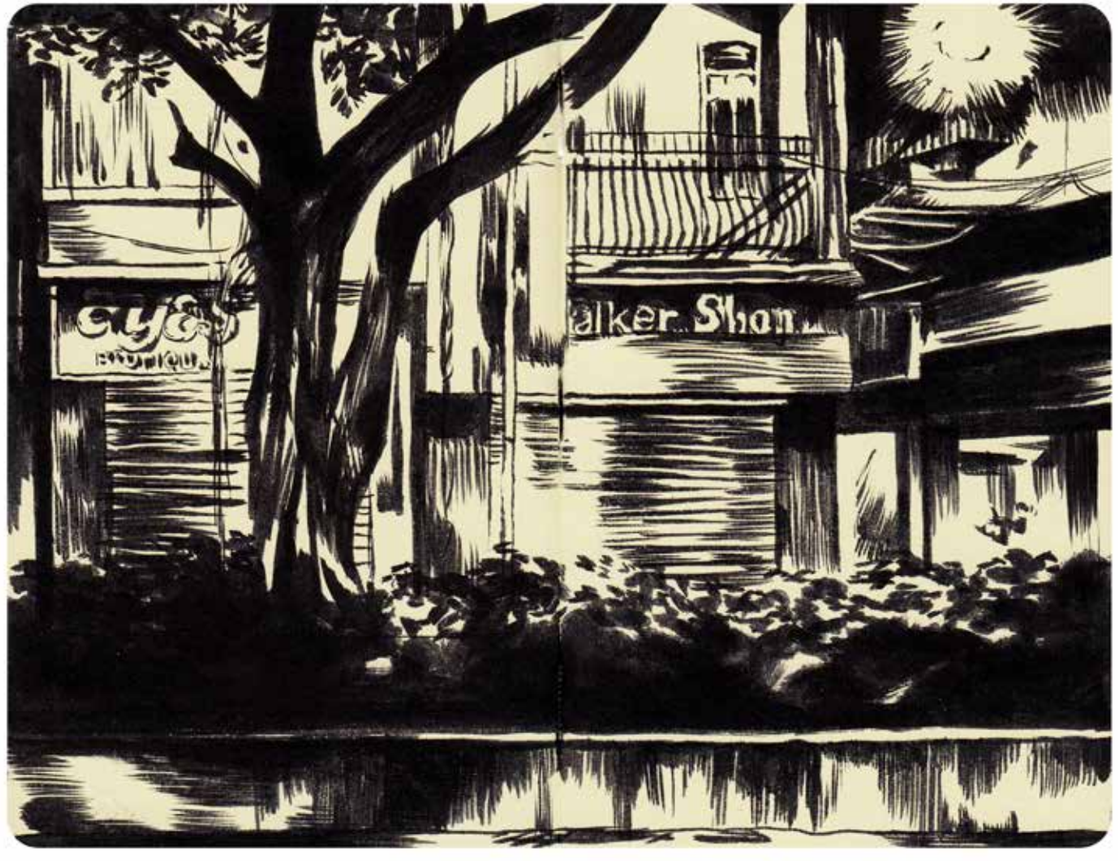
Back in Maputo, I find out that the gravitational pull of the Moon combines periodically with that of the Sun to create higher tides. But my online research is interrupted. It seems some of my father's university colleagues want to meet me. A dinner party, just like that, has to happen. At the table, covered with delicacies and Professors of Architecture, the Portuguese language is represented by its main speakers. A professor from Brazil, one from Angola, two from Mozambique, three from Portugal. The host, white but a native, begins to explain what *machimbombos* are. "They are *chapas*, that's what we used to call them." *Chapas* are vans that function as buses, but smaller, normally packed with people. My father thinks of another one. "I never understood why, at some point, they were called *semicolectivos*. What is that, a *semicolectivo*? It's either a collective or it isn't!" His indignation is always tempered by the musicality the language has acquired in this country. The sense of surprise adds a few notes that we in Portugal don't use. But the owner of the house has not finished the lesson. "Now, *machimbombos* comes from *machimba*..." My father puts his hands on his head. They love each other, are very good friends. Like a well-rehearsed *vaudeville* duo, each one has his role to play. My father is the serious one, but that doesn't mean he doesn't know where the conversation has to go. It has to look as if he's reluctant to go there, that's part of the *show*.

The meaning of *machimba* is implied, mainly because it is not immediately verbalized since we are at the table. But the Brazilian man does not understand, and the Angolan woman kind of throws him the answer, somewhat under the table. "It's *cocó*." The Brazilian is confused. "What do you mean by *cocó*? Is it a chicken?" The table erupts, silverware and dishes tinkle with laughter. I pour myself some more BSE[vi] wine and come to the rescue. "No, it´s *cocó*! There is pee pee and there is *cocó*. What is it in Brazil?" His eyes open wide with a mixture of excitement and recognition. What a surprise. "What we have is *cocô*!!!!! *Cocó* is what chickens say!" I tell him that the other day I had a delicious coco(nut) chicken. He can´t contain his happiness. "I lived in Portugal for years and just now learned a new word. *Cocó*!" The night is a success. It´s obvious from his joy: without *cocó* life would be shit.

Backyard, Maputo, Mozambique 02 Apr 2012



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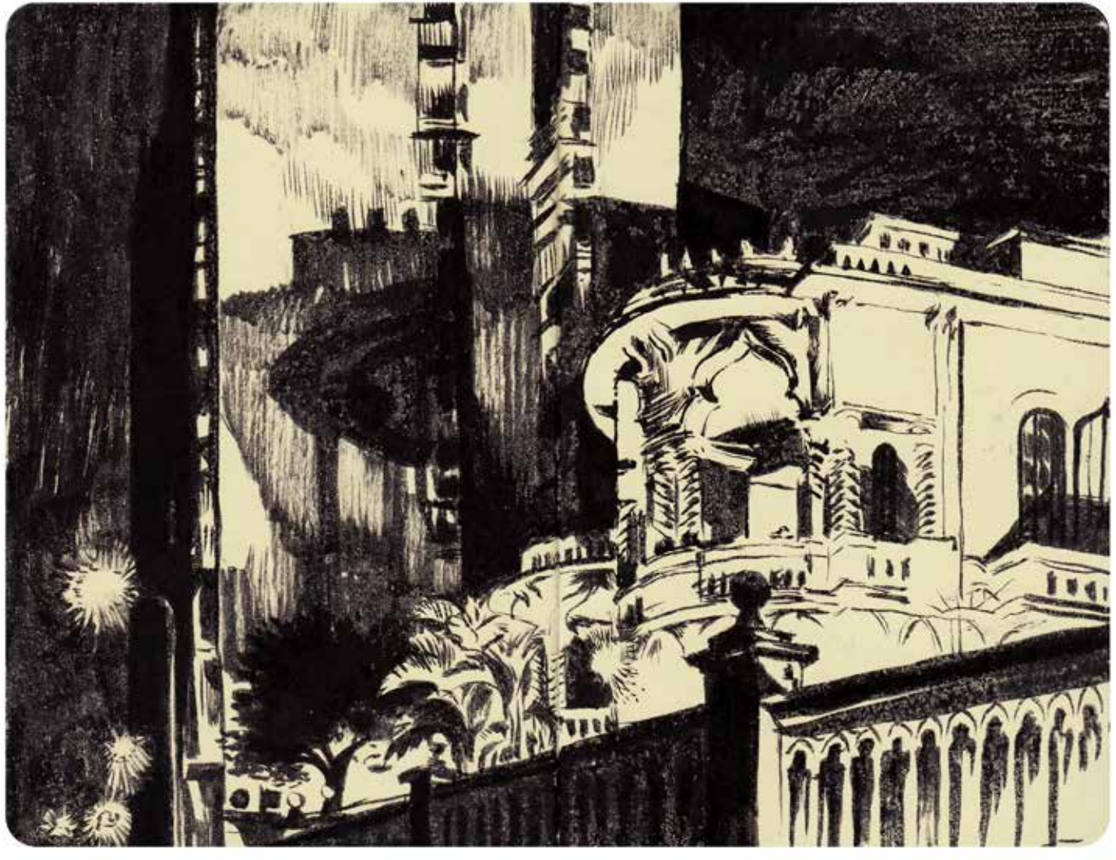
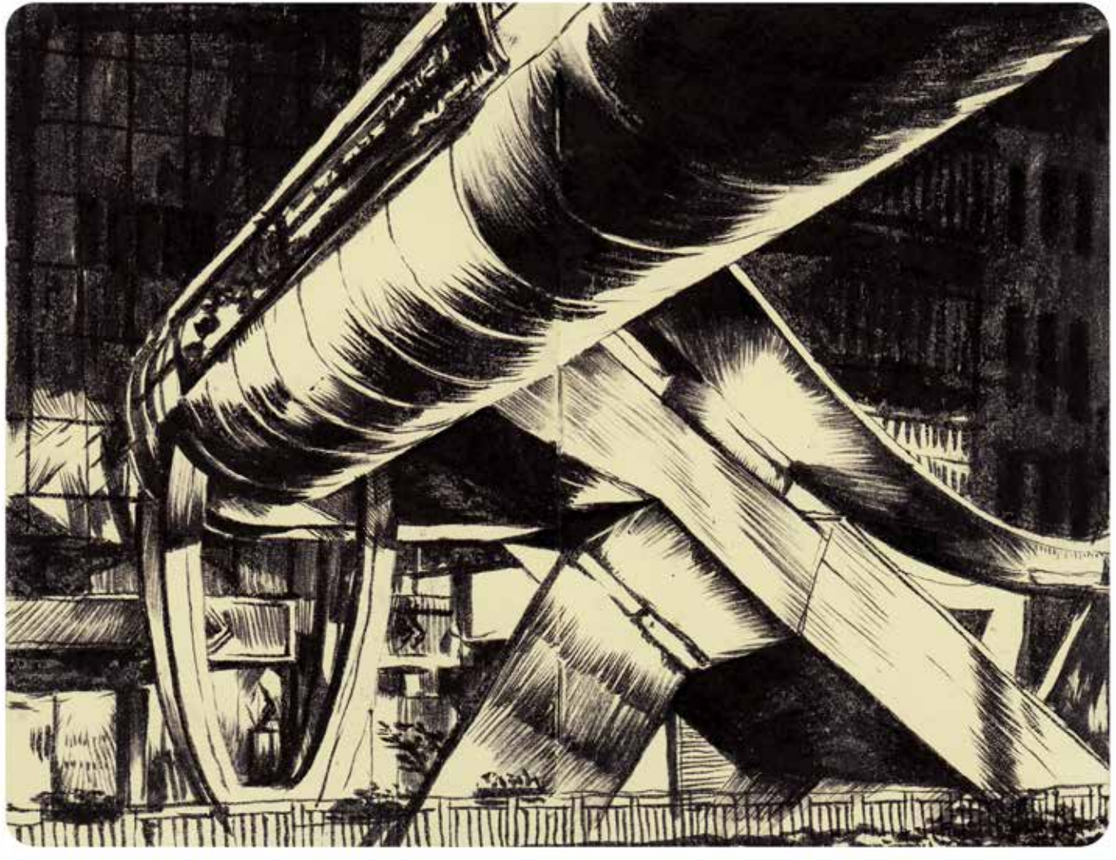
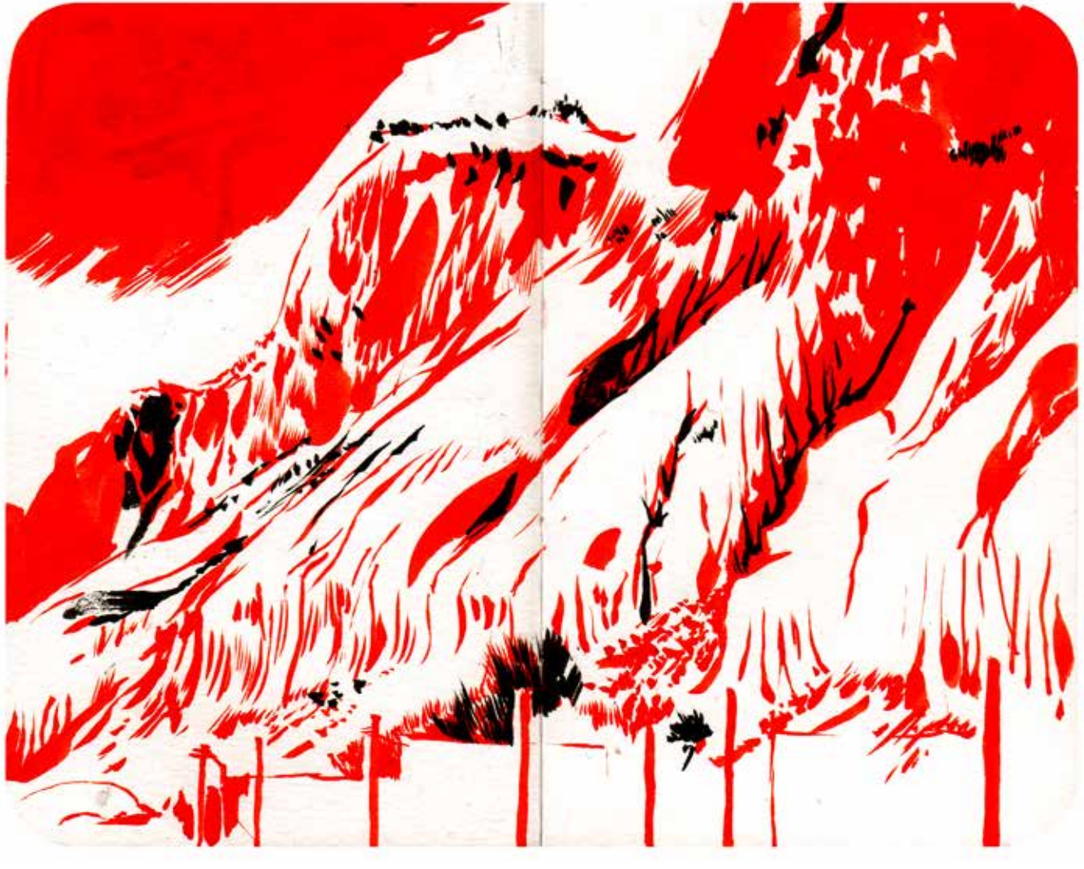


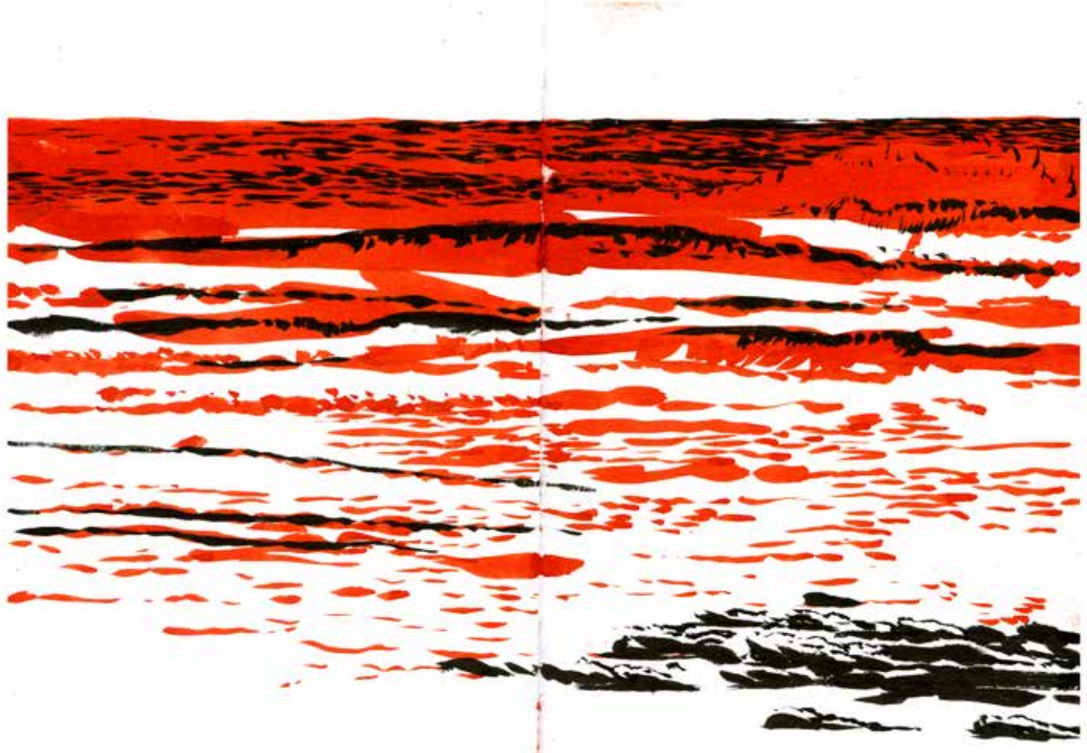


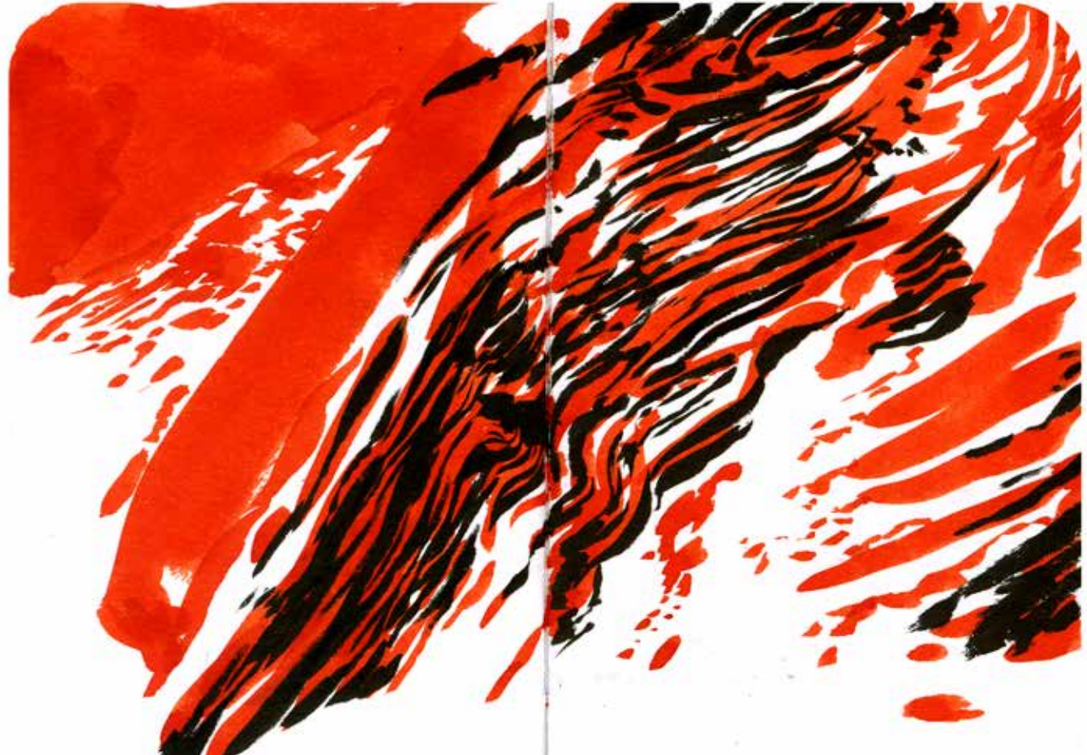
Governador Nobre de Carvalho Bridge, Macau, China 02 May 2012

Falésia Beach, Portugal 14 May 2012



Vale Figueiras Beach, Alentejo, Portugal 16 May 2012





Coronel Mesquita Street, Macau, China 27 Jun 2012

In the taxi, after giving him the address in Cantonese, the taxi driver says:

— "What's the block sir?"

I'm surprised that he speaks to me in English, unusual in this corner of the world. I hesitate, but I remain faithful to the local guidebook.

— *"Sap sam."*

The driver then says something in Cantonese, that I obviously don't understand. He's confused.

— "Oh, I thought you could speak Cantonese!"

— "I'm sorry, I only know the numbers." "And my address." "And *momantai*."

We laugh. He goes on, enthusiastic.

— "You know? Cantonese is very difficult. It took me some time to learn. Mandarin is a little easier, but Cantonese is hard."

Intrigued, I begin to think the taxi driver is from Beijing, or another more northerly region of the country.

— "So you're not from Canton?"

— "I'm from Indonesia, had to learn this language. 30 years ago... Where are you from?"

— "Portugal."

— "Portuguese? I speak Portuguese!"

— "Really? So you know all the relevant languages here."

As if knowing Portuguese was of any use in this country. But it is easy to feel flattered by others' interest in what is ours. I am continuously amazed by the street names in Portuguese, by the police uniforms that still say *Polícia* in reflective letters. I was commenting the other day with someone, that the logic of this apparent tolerance on the part of the Chinese escapes me. Of what use was Portuguese in the territory? They explained that perhaps it was a way of making Macau distinctive, picturesque, different from China proper. In a sense, it's a way of having something from the outside within, and that was always the purpose of Macau. It's a *Portugal dos Pequeninos*[vii], idealized way before the transplanted Venice of the Venetian Casino, which looks so kitsch to so many. It occurs to me now that the impulse was always the same. The Middle Kingdom contains curiosity by the millions.

I continue to speak English with the taxi driver because his thick Portuguese accent isn't very trustworthy. It's better to play it safe. He goes on.

— "Portuguese is easier, Cantonese is more difficult." I give up, Portuguese it is.

— "And Indonesian, easy or difficult?"

— “It´s like Portuguese, easy.”

— *“*It is? How so?*”*

— “It’s easy! You say *sapato*[viii] , we say *sepatu*. *Manteiga*[ix] , we say *mentega*. So Portuguese is easy for us… Here we are, *sap sam*, number thirteen…”

I’ll have to do more research. I’ve heard that Japanese has several words of Portuguese origin, but I didn’t know that in Indonesia there were also signs of sixteenth-century contagion. We were sowing more Latin than I thought, with the help of crucifixes and trinkets. And some gunpowder to spice it up.

— “And how do you say “thank you”?”

— *“Terima kasih!”*

— *“Terima kasih”*

— “Thank you, sir!”

I PRESSURED THE CHECK-IN GIRL, BUT NO LUCK. TWO SEPARATE FLIGHTS with a layover in Dubai, seven hours each, window seats all occupied. Sometimes I can get a seat in the emergency exit row, more spacious, but not even that. The lady seemed genuinely worried about my well-being, a little bit too much. She was apologizing that the flight was full, was trying, speaking on the phone with someone who seemed to have some power to move the pieces on the board more freely, according to their own rules. But no, no luck. Emirates Airlines had recently opened a route through Dubai, which functioned as a more affordable turntable, for those like me who like to hop between hemispheres. The meridians acting as barriers on an obstacle course. Perhaps they'd been too ambitious or imprudent. In an era of *online sites*, with automatic price comparisons, it's expected that flights with lower than usual prices, to the other side of the world, would attract immediate attention. The result: everyone likes a good bargain, preferably with a window seat. "I don´t even think I can put you in the aisle." This aisle thing... I never understood why some people like the aisle. The window is the thing, the hallucination of a landscape which inclines, the scale of which shifts at the whim of the pilot, with the option of leaning against it and sleeping peacefully. Once someone explained that those who choose the aisle want to go to the bathroom more easily, a woman's thing. It had never occurred to me. Like when a female friend of mine explained that there are women who sit on the beach right at the edge of the sea because they want to relieve themselves without anyone knowing. I had always thought that the female gender was more prone to bucolic contemplation...

It's OK, I get used to the idea that I will have to spend a few hours trying to sleep without touching the two strangers that will function as frames for me. I note the efforts of the *check-in* girl.

On the plane, I head to my assigned seat, 10F. But something isn't right. Instead of the usual seat stuck between so many others, I encounter an armchair from the examination room of a futuristic psychologist's office, with so much space that I imagine doing a tribal dance around it. I explain to the airline hostess that I didn't ask, and especially didn't pay, for that, to which she replies that the flight is too full, so they had to assign business class seats to some people in economy. Slowly it occurs to me that the first girl, from *check-in*, is the one responsible for this providence. Naughty, she decided to give me a little surprise. It seems kindness and generosity still exist.

The child trapped inside of me sits and inspects its new toy. It's a cocoon of compartments, buttons, options. When I was a child I liked the Transformers, and this chair can turn into a bed. I stretch out my feet and can't touch the armchair in front. I try all the buttons and the *touchscreen* control panel on the left, and things begin to move, a partition goes up, uncontrollable, the giant screen way up in front, on the back of the chair ahead, lights up and informs me that I have tons

of luck, there are a bunch of things that I can look at, touch, feel, experience. It's going to be an excitement-filled journey. It's written there, so it must be true.

I feel bad about the partition that went up between me and the person seated to my left. I don´t want them to think I'm antisocial; it's good to observe good neighborly rules among cocoons. I say cocoon, but the word that more readily jumps out is *pod*, which in English also means shell. That's what technology is good for these days, to seal us off in our own comforts. And to make us think of words in English. To remain entertained, to confine our world to a bunch of social media tools in order to share it virtually. But we are like those elderly folks who observe the outside through the window all day. Our windows are more sophisticated, but harder to shut. They keep us indoors. We forget that from the cocoon and the pod something new is supposed to emerge, a step in a transition that allows for new flights. Let's see what we transform ourselves into in a few years, into moths or butterflies or *drones*.

On the other side of my rebel partition, which refuses to go back to its initial position, is a nun. I remember her from the line at *check-in*. She looks like a novice, dressed head to toe in white, young, tiny. She has Asian features, but dark skin, perhaps she is Indonesian or Malaysian. Her companion is an older woman, less defined by the habit, uncovered head, graying, Portuguese. I remember noticing how different they were from the cute nuns of Hollywood fantasies. In films,

women of the clergy are always one step away from being seduced into sin by one of us, virile and irresistible men. But these nuns seem to have made their choice. The arms are thin, rigid, from daily chores, from work. Their tense and dried out bodies try not to be feminine, and they almost succeed, shy underneath those habits. Different cocoons. They know what they are waiting for.

They are strange, nuns. In the USA they rebelled against the papal hierarchy. They dared claim that Christ preaches tolerance and compassion, even towards minorities, towards those less fortunate and, yes, towards women. Dangerous ideas to the central, masculine power of the Catholic Church. Men who do not understand that a nun can try to stop being a woman, but that it will be more difficult for her to stop being a mother.

I try all the buttons and I find a balance control for my cocoon/armchair. *Podchair*. It's impossible to feel truly comfortable, anticipating the next necessity and the respective instant solution. But much better than traveling in economy of course. And my neighbors? The novice's screen is off, everything seems calm, maybe she's asleep. I peek over the partition and it makes sense. She's reading a book, calmly. In that moment, she is soaring higher than me.

The plane begins its descent, as if coming to rest on a ghostly bed of skyscrapers. The urban structure is intuited by the constellations of illuminated windows on dark, elegant, geometrical silhouettes, contrasted by the low clouds, which reflect the nocturnal lights of the metropolis. Night in Hong Kong has an inverted landscape, the sky full, embossed with vapor, solidified by the indirect light of the city, hovering above the sparkle of millions of homes which have not yet gone to bed. And perhaps they never do.

My first plane journey ends here, eight thousand kilometers from home, 22 hours from departure. At 16 years old. On exiting into the night air, I am hit by the hot air from the plane's engine. Or so I think, until I notice that the reactor is underneath the wing, way back. What I feel is the South China atmosphere, humid, persistent, gelatinous. The air, impossibly hot, forms beads of viscous sweat on the skin. Clothing acquires a new friction against the body, sticking to it. Even thoughts become muffled, along with the surrounding sounds, absorbed by the air, aquatic.

Perhaps that's why Hong Kong and Macau exist mostly at night within me. I arrived here for the first time 20 years ago.

Macau is multifaceted, wrinkled, and more dramatic when lit by street lamps. It becomes projected, phantasmagoric, graphic.

Walking the streets at night, you can find, on every corner, some detail that would look good on paper. The telecommunications and electrical wires are lines that connect the facades, that vandalize them. Instead of graffiti, people express themselves with clandestine utilitarian interventions that superimpose themselves on everything. The impossible bustle of the day is implied by its vestiges at night. Not only the asphalt, but also the facades of the buildings, show signs of the previous day's skids.

It's the only city I know where you feel no fear in the streets after hours. It´s as if the all--encompassing quality of the air, hot and humid, adds an extra level of security. A return to an amniotic environment of contemplative freedom.

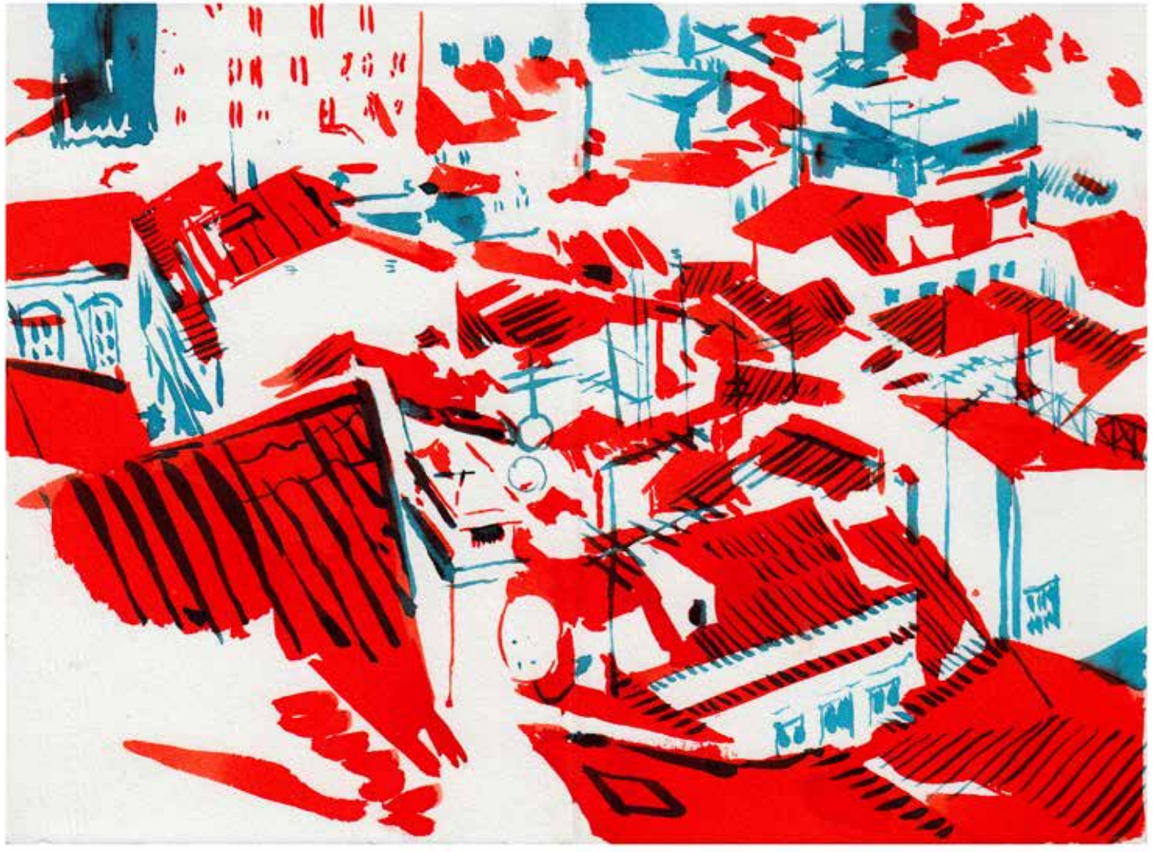
THE RESTAURANT IS SMALL, BUT THERE IS A FIRST FLOOR WHERE THERE is almost always a free table. I am looking for a quiet place, so I sit upstairs, where only one other table is occupied. I tuck myself in near the group of five Chinese adolescents who are eating in silence. They wear uniforms from the same school, but with slight personal variations that makes them unique, human. Those that keep their jackets on reveal the name of the school, Brito.

I like to eat and read, and these days the most practical is to read on the phone, challenging all supposed rules about healthy reading. It's more practical than a book, you don't have to keep the pages open, you don't have to carry it before and after the meal. After a few minutes of attempting to find a hierarchy in managing the phone and the silverware, I notice the silence. No one speaks at the next table. Three of them are looking at their phones, one eats pasta greedily, and his mouth is full, another, huge, doesn't seem like much of a talker and looks around like a nightclub bouncer. One of them looks up from his phone and in my direction, intrigued. The one eating spaghetti lifts his gaze from the plate once in a while to try and see what his friend is so intently observing on his phone, focused. But no one speaks. Not a sound. They say we live in the Information Age, and are constantly surrounded by communication tools. We know what is happening with all of our friends and idols, or at least we have that illusion. Because what we are given is the idealized script that each one writes for his own life, in real time, on social media. Living has become an

aesthetic act. In the past, there were people who even spent money on books that would reveal a certain social status. They didn't even need to read them. These days there is a dematerialization of ostentation, in the sense that the books we expose on our shelves no longer count, what counts is rather what we say we read and what we quote. The trips we take, the food we eat, the opinions we have, the texts we write. Everything backed up by the thousands of photos taken at that sublime and transcendent moment, adequately lived and filtered by a phone screen that we quickly place in front of everything we might want to remember. We love, we travel, we eat and dance for an audience, most of the time imaginary, because not all of us are Hollywood stars or have people who are interested in what we're doing. I can't but think that, though the human species is by nature social, it doesn't mean it is more naturally so in a network. Because the interaction becomes internal and constantly varied, without a corresponding physical component. It's abstract, an embryonic behavior of telepathy. We already know everything we want to know before coming face to face with whoever is on the other end of the line. And we are thirsty for more, looking for more now, this instant. At the dawn of the digital revolution, there were those who said that reading was in danger. But today it seems that speech is what is becoming obsolete, while we read what others write, think, desire, do, disdain.

I looked up from my phone and caught the young Chinese guy still looking at me, as if I were the most interesting subject at that moment. All the others at the table were in their own private worlds, surfing an infinity of realities at their fingertips like me.

We looked each other in the eye and I realized that neither of us was really there.



Alfama Rooftops, Lisbon, Portugal 13 Feb 2013

I WATCH THE OSCILLATING WING, DANCING TO THE RHYTHM OF THE turbulence, which shakes the plane as it descends into Istanbul and, as usual, I remember that, statistically, the riskiest times on a flight are take-off and landing. In Lisbon I'll have to go straight to a family friend's wake, from my mother's generation. If I get there. Paranoid, I always think the plane is going to crash, that a life can change or end in an unexpected blink of an eye. But I force myself to roam the world, despite the fear. After all, you either live or you don't, and it's not advisable to leave things half done.

We atheists have a strange relationship with death. There is nothing to be anxious about or to fear. We simply cease to exist, which equates to a non-feeling, neither good nor bad. It's like feeling pre-birth. Or the absence of someone we never got to meet. But fear remains, more or less defining our lives. I get the need to be religious, and I don't believe religion will ever be completely replaced by a more enlightened vision of the world based on things that can be tested, known. We will always have a need to explain the fear of death, simply because it exists, immune to clever rationalizations for its lack of logic. And as much as biology, sociology, psychology and genetics may explain the reasons for our survival instincts, protection of offspring and other innate behaviors, the fact is that the anxiety is there, embedded in us. Asking for a simpler and immediately tangible reason.

Fear 06 Feb 2013

I try to rationalize what I feel as I watch the wing fighting to sustain the enormous machine that is magically trying to safely land me on the ground, on the tar hidden below, beneath the fog. Perhaps the reason for the fear is not knowing, never being able to predict if and when something will go wrong. The other day I had to draw the caricature of a man who discovered he had terminal cancer and would only live a few more months. Having lived his whole life with anxiety over his own existence, he was now calm and happy. The wait was coming to an end, he could relax.

I think that, yes, that might be the source of fear. That's also why I don't like horror movies. When dealing with death, it's the *suspense* that kills me.

Limoeiro Square, Lisbon, Portugal 13 Feb 2013

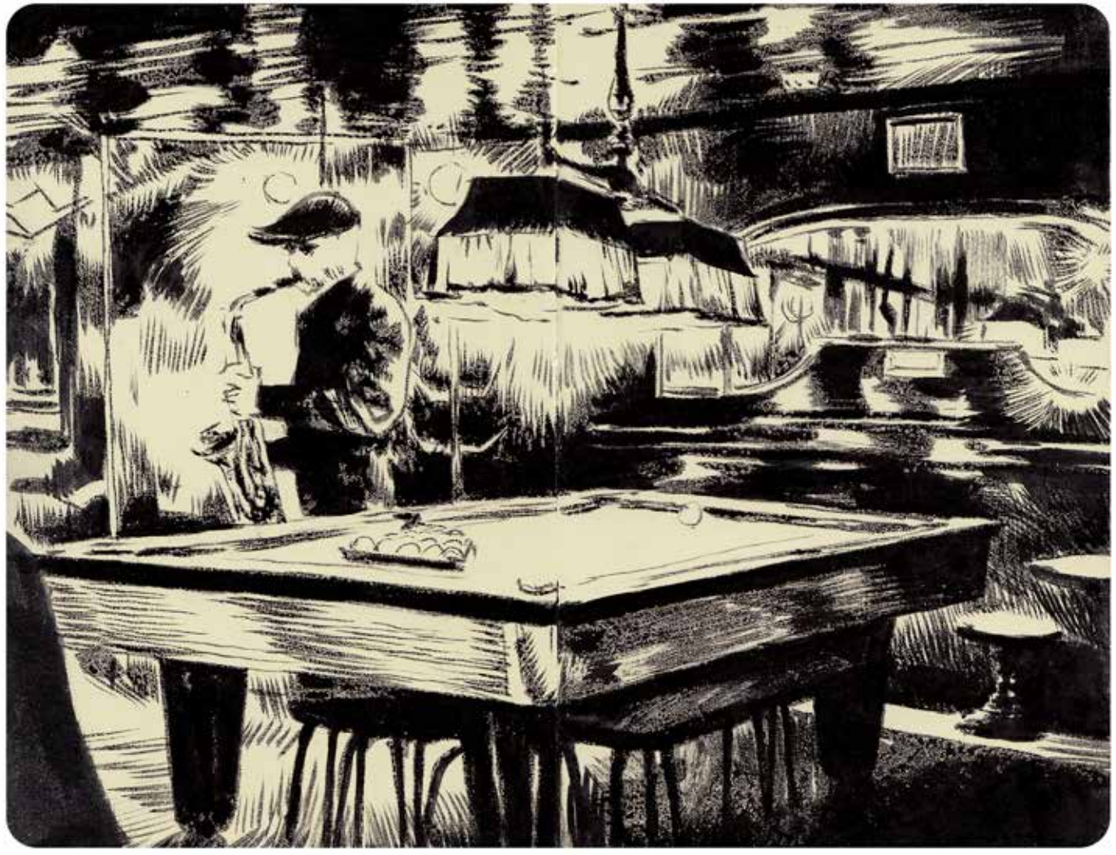
Augusto Gil Park, Graça, Lisbon, Portugal 14 Feb 2013

Santa Clara Field, Lisbon, Portugal 17 Feb 2013

Alfama Rooftops, Lisbon, Portugal 17 Feb 2013

Parque das Nações Marina, Lisbon, Portugal 19 Feb 2013

View from Nossa Senhora do Monte, Lisbon, Portugal 27 Feb 2013



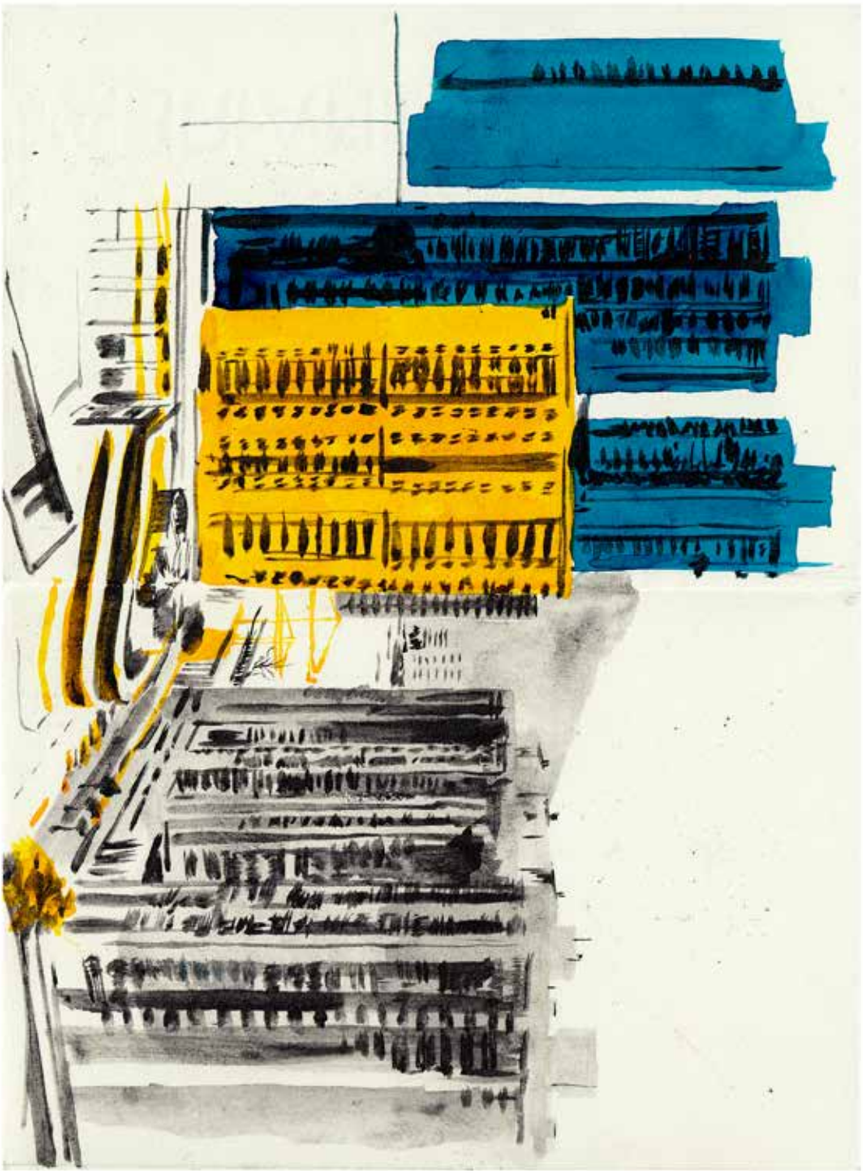
I WAKE UP IN THE MORNING, OPEN THE BLINDS IN THE ROOM, AND IT'S the usual view, the park at the entrance of the building with the trash cans lining the sidewalk. There is a middle-aged couple sorting through one of the cans. It's not the first time I see them, it's a familiar scene. Right next to them, as usual, there is a parked van, doors wide open, revealing that it belongs to the couple. Their obvious complicity, silent, calm and methodical, lends an air of dignity to their activity, even though it's speckled by other people's trash. Inside the van, you can make out the spoils of uncountable searches through Lisbon's discarded trinkets. I assume it's a daily routine for this couple, a survival ritual. I ask myself what might they find every day that justifies their continued search. Pride and ingrained notions of class don't permit us to focus even our curiosity on a trash can, we're more used to gathering shells and polished pebbles on the beach, or meatless bones in the countryside. We have an instinctive preconception of nature as clean, that we aren't a part of it, for better or worse. In reality, I believe you can find many useful things in urban trash, perhaps even enough to eliminate most of your material desires. Just shift your gaze from the window to the inside of your home, and you can see that half of our belongings could very well be inside one of those trash cans. But for now everything is here at home, protected by ties of abstract sentimentality and laziness.

Almost simultaneously, on the same sidewalk, a knife sharpener, and his Pan flute to attract customers, enters the scene. He walks by the couple, busy around the trash cans, without noticing them, eyes glued to the residential buildings' windows above, always playing his flute. The sound he makes attracts stares and childhood memories, and speaks of a time when our lives were not yet wholly composed of disposables. He hopes that before we throw out our knives and scissors we will call him to breathe life back into that which hardly serves us anymore.

All you have to do is open a blind and, with an open window, choose from among the past, present and future. Throw away, resist or try to salvage what's left.

Praia Grande Srteet, Macau, China 05 Apr 2013

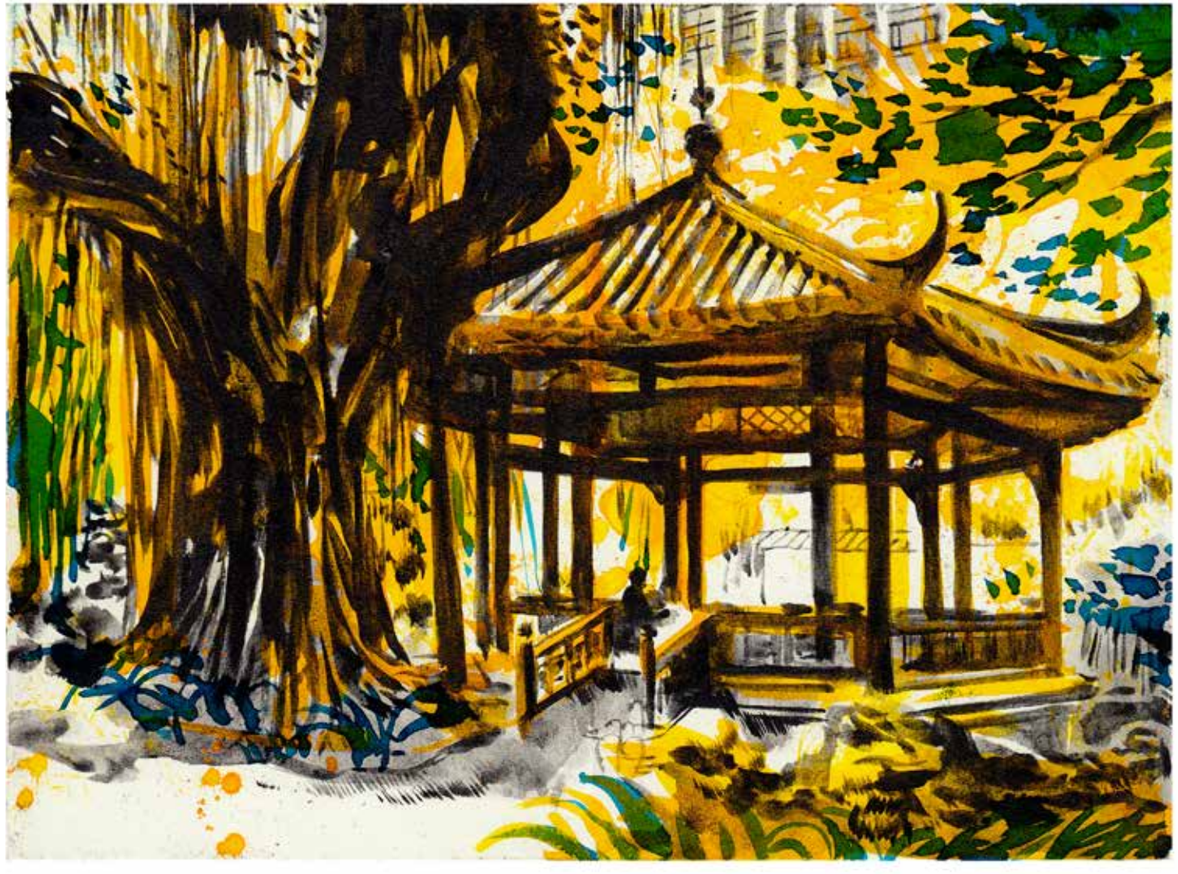
View from Mong-Ha Fort, Macau 07 Apr 2013



Fai-Chi-Kei, view from the Mong-Ha Fort, Macau, China 07 Apr 2013

Rooftops seen from Mong-Ha Fort, Macau, China

Coronel Mesquita Street, Macau, China



The last three days were a blur. I travel without taking a va-cation, and I work on the go. In Macau I draw Thatcher for London, while I criticize the Portuguese government in a *cartoon* for the *Diário de Notícias* newspaper in Lisbon. I doze, dream of family and friends on the other side of the world, I have nightmares, wake up and force myself to accept an assignment to do an evocative illustration of the North American masterpiece *Moby Dick* for *Vanity Fair*. I'm at the end of my resources. Work always traveled before me to some corners of the world, and moves more quickly. And since last year, I decided to travel as well, constantly, but in the opposite direction of the drawings, in a symmetrical pendularity. It just happened that way, I'm not even sure why yet. If I make a drawing for the USA I should be in Macau, if I think of a drawing for London, I might be in Mozambique, when I get *email* from Zurich, I desire Shanghai. It is, without a doubt, a sign that the places through which I like to travel don't have a market for my work. It's also not uncommon for a father and his children to have different tastes. I run from Winter and the drawings seek out fireplaces.

Without thinking or sleeping enough, there is another boat, an airport, a plane, layovers after layovers, an endless succession of light meals in which one of the choices is always *chicken*, after *check-in*, before the X rays, metal in the tray, *do you have liquids*, *boarding pass please*, *would*

you like something to drink, fasten seat belt, prepare for landing, transfer desk, moving walkways, moving walkways. I know I move through these places because I see my reflection being dragged along, motionless, through an endless glass wall which is superimposed onto an infinity of planes of various colors and potential destinations. Mine was chosen without much thought, without research or preparation. They were dice rolled a week ago, and I've already forgotten why, it no longer matters. Finally, I wait, with a vacant look, next to a rubber conveyor belt which suddenly begins to move, I pick up the last vestige of familiarity that remains with me in the shape of a bag, and I exit onto the street after the last stamp, I blink and...

The man in front of a legion of many, many others, all dressed in the same khaki, asks me if I want a taxi, and I accept, telling him the final destination, which I can still remember: Afonso Guest House, Panjim, Goa.

The road snakes its way along a coast covered in tall vegetation, tropical. Coconut trees, palm trees as far as the eye can see and sometimes, half hidden by the omnipresent foliage, somewhat familiar buildings; I've seen this somewhere. They're churches, transplanted from some village in the Alentejo[x] or the Beiras[xi] . The scenery is peaceful, the sea calm, it's hot. I close my eyes and think of a bed, any bed, doesn't matter where.

It's seven-thirty in the morning, and at the Afonso Guest House I'm greeted by a lady who must be the matriarch of the clan, of the family business. With extreme kindness, she asks me in perfect Portuguese if I am André. I look around, trying to absorb the famous Fontainhas neighborhood, where they say Portugal still hides and survives the sweeping of history and of the Indian national pride. "Looks like Portugal, doesn't it?" she asks, making me curious. I ask her "Have you ever been in Portugal?" "No", she says smiling, "but it's what people usually tell me." I'm inclined to agree, it looks like something I've seen in Portugal, or not, like something I've seen on a postcard of Portugal sold on the Rua Augusta[xii] or, wait, it´s not even that, it looks a lot like all the places scattered around the world that people say look like Portugal. Like the original, not so much. It looks like some streets in Maputo and Pemba, like historical neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro, like alleyways in Macau in which the colonial balconies are supported by iron beams that keep them from breaking. It's a Portuguese architecture that tries to deal with the heat, that allows the air to flow. But it also reminds me of some manors up in my grandfather's region, the Beira Alta[xiii] , that my mother explained were houses built by folks who came back from Brazil loaded with money and a tendency towards colonial architecture. It's a Portugal that doesn't realize it is no longer the same and cannot exist away from here, still containing that DNA we recognize, but which grew with its roots planted in this place, from the nutrients in this soil. It's ours, but not so much.

The room, that really is mine, for now. And the bed is perfectly adequate.

Upon waking, after a long period without sleep, there are always a few short moments during which you process the environment and, in some cases, you stop to think of what the hell happened. All I have to do is open the window, splash some water on my face, take a short walk down the street, and I reach the definite conclusion that I'd arrived at reluctantly as I opened my eyes after four hours of sleep. I'm in India. In an India, to be more precise. I sit at the outdoor terrace recommended by the guide and by the man at the *guesthouse*, and I order a beer. I missed this type of heat that forces you to drink stupidly cold beer, that relaxes the muscles and makes you lower your shoulders, stretch out your neck and throw back your head, eyes closed. "Hello, how are you?" asks the lady. She is standing at the edge of the porch where I'm sitting, and I can tell she is the owner of the place. She starts to chat, wants to know about me, where I´m from. She lights up. "Oh Portugal, I've been to Portugal! Fifteen days, I went to Fatima!"[xiv] I remember that on the visa request for India they ask what your religion is, an act of statistical caution which gives you a clue to everything bad that can happen in the name of whatever one's god or gods. I am more and more of a militant atheist, but one who believes in tolerance for all creeds. Knowing full well that a creed always has a fundamental intolerance for all other creeds. Nevertheless, the more I cross

borders and note that the things that unite us are much more numerous than those that separate us, the more intolerant I become of parochialisms, factionalisms and nationalisms, regionalisms and isms that more closely resemble "isthmuses", ever tighter strangulations that make it difficult to naturally go from a handshake to a hug among people who are so similar in their differences. But I don't have the guts to tell this lady, who is so sincerely lovable. She goes on: "In Fátima there was this olive tree. An olive tree! And all the olives, many many, were laying on the ground. Such a waste..." I understand what she means and start to smile, I tell her my name and ask for hers. "Linda, my name is Linda." The restaurant employee serving the outdoor terrace, who was listening to the conversation next to her, hanging back, expressionless, younger, almost nasty, reacts as if he were an automaton, and points above my head in a bossy manner. I look up and see a sign that looks like a street name, embossed into the facade, but on which is written Linda's Viva Panjim Restaurant. I understood, OK, her name is Linda. The employee goes back to the void, silent, next to the owner. Owner of the restaurant or his owner, it's not very clear. Back to the gist of things, I go back to smiling again. Of all the pomp and ritual surrounding Fátima, and without disparaging the genuine faith this lady must feel, what she was most shocked and marked by was this waste of olives from the sacred little olive tree. I explain that it was above the olive tree that the Virgin Mary appeared to the three little shepherds, the seed that gave rise to all the modern trap-

pings that surround it now, chapels, buses, promises, altars and candles. Amputated limbs made of wax, of hope. My tendency towards the humorous visual analogy gets ready to tell her that the olives are merely droppings from the lamb of god, therefore equally sacred, but that would be too much. She says she's used to living with what she has, no waste, no excess, simple. Inside the restaurant, besides the tables, there is also a desk where she works and gets paid among the clients as they eat. She tells me of her daughters, scattered around the world, and I think of drawings going where the wind takes them and of Anglo-Saxon fireplaces. How many people who have known hunger have taken away the image of the olives on the ground in Fatima? I tell her that here, in her country, there are also devotion, monuments, imposing historical presences. A richer and more intricate mosaic of millennial beliefs. "Yes, but Fátima is Fátima" she says patiently.

A bell tolls, it surprises me. Once again I am teleported back to the Beira Alta, woken by the peal of the church bells of Escalhão[xv], my grandfather's village. But it's Saint Sebastian's chapel, right next door. "Do you hear this bell?" she jumps up, alert, looking at some unspecified spot in the sky, an elementary schoolteacher's finger pointing. "It means someone died." I'm confused; how does she know it isn't something else? "It's this kind of ding, ding-dong… ding, ding-dong." The rhythm of the bell calls the neighborhood to mourn. She excuses herself with a smile and goes inside. She wants to call someone to find out who has departed. She has no more time for someone who has just arrived.

On the other side of the narrow alley from the porch on which I'm seated, I see newspaper clippings hanging, praising the Viva Panjim restaurant. And her photo, younger, with her full name. Linda de Souza[xvi] , of course. Portugal is, after all, here, so close.

Valvoline

Each departure is a reunion, each return an escape. Or maybe it's resignation. I go in search of not needing more than what I can carry, cutting the umbilical cord that unites us all to everything that accumulates around us. Objects, possessions, obligations, affections. At home I am slower, more anchored and inert. And I feel submerged. I ask myself what are all these things that fill the shelves and the cabinets surrounding me. In a hundred years no one will care about that book I held onto stubbornly, and which I never picked up again. Away from home I gain clarity and lightness, a leaner shape.

But I go around the world and no longer want to be a tourist. I don't want the pressure of having to see the sights, the monuments, the wonderful things. I want to be in places as if I had always been there, from time to time noticing something that deserves attention, naturally. Creating familiar habits whenever I can, spending more time at the corner coffee shop. Or inside, reading with the window open, allowing the words to become contaminated by the sounds of the unfamiliar streets. At times, the place I most want to delight in and get to know is Lisbon. Because I am irritated by everyone going around the world taking the same photos as everyone else, in the same places to which they are catapulted by jet, exhibiting upon their return a great tolerance for all the picturesque and typical and terribly funny customs, before badmouthing the color of their colleague's skirt. Their boss's toupee.

It's upon turning the corner of my home that I want to discover a nook in which I've never been, pause under the shade of that tree that I always walk around. Ask about the stories I should know about. I want to catch a tourist bus at Terreiro do Paço[xvii] and fly over the Baixa[xviii] by helicopter. I want to treat Lisbon well, speak more kindly with her, see her with seeing eyes. The more I think of it, the decline in our interaction is my fault. Because a lasting relationship requires work and dedication, a conscious surrender. And lasts a lifetime. I waste my time in places that never spent any time on me, and I turn my back on the city that made me.

Each departure is a trimming down to the marrow that we don't want to leave behind, but which might limit us. At home, as in any other place, we must make an effort not to turn our backs on ourselves. In our own city it is more difficult, because it's a mirror of those who depend on it and those who suffer with it, and often we don't like what we see. It knows us too well. At every return, we find the identity we usually wear at home waiting for us, scruffy where we left it in a hurry, ready to be shaken and worn once again. Whether the nakedness was worth it, remains to be seen.

We search for a meaning of life underneath the stones, made of beliefs calcified by time. I ask myself whether anyone truly finds anything, behind so many faces lit up by certainty. Not me, and I'm in trouble. But lately I was given a clue. It seems to me that such meaning must be profoundly individual, assuming each one of us is the author of one part of their journey and knows where they come from, they intuit where they want to go. Or where they don't want to go. I am suspicious of answers that are too easy or too all-encompassing, formulaic and loose, without content. Adaptable to everyone. It seems to me that the biggest sign that the search is over is when the need for it disappears. I found that I stop thinking about searching when I am drawing from sight, when I record what surrounds me. Drawing has the effect of slowing everything down, of immersing me in a particular corner of reality. I don't think about anything else other than what I am seeing. In fact, I don't think, I look. And it is the drawing that finds on my behalf.

Perhaps it's the closest thing to a purpose I'll ever find. Up until now I've always thought of the problem backwards. I don't have to know what to look for, I have to be aware of when I am not looking, and caress those moments. And that always happens when I sit down, calmly inhaling my surroundings, exhaling a drawing. In the end, maybe it's not that bad, I can foresee my role in the cosmic order of things. I am a mere witness.

I MUST BE HAVING A REACTION TO EVERYTHING THAT BOMBARDS US daily in the *media*, on the Internet, on social networks, and the like. Constellations of pulverized information that constantly stimulate us and give us the illusion that we know a lot about everything. In truth, we don't know anything to any great degree, we know a little about many things. We scratch the surface of countless topics, confident that, even if we're not correct, we can consult the cell phone and adjust our perception. We have relegated our memory to gadgets, and use them as external *backup* drives for our experiences, events, opinions, affections. Our brain becomes RAM, *random-access memory*, able only to process what is happening in real-time, but not able to retain anything. Disposable. What gets recorded is what counts. But the question remains: if what determines our behavior and our emotional response to what we experience is the memory of past events, how do we see the world when that memory is dislocated, outside of us? I remember once, as a kid, seeing my mother crying in front of the television. I didn't understand why, I was frightened and intrigued. They were showing images of a square with tanks, and a small man confronting them. They were saying it was in China. As an adolescent, I didn't yet possess the emotional baggage that would permit me to project myself into others' fight for freedom. An old man is more moved than a child, because empathy is based on the accumulated knowledge of personal experience, and in recognizing the same pain in others. Emotion is memory. A newborn cries from pain or want. That is the extent of its knowledge.

If the access to information has become almost ubiquitous, and if the production of information itself surrounds us all, daily, constantly, we have to develop the capacity to store it in a location with lots more space, outside our limited heads. But that implies the risk of losing the emotional cataloguing that we give our experiences, the map by which we navigate the world ethically and morally, that shows us the borders of our identity. How can we relate to our present and our future if our memory was the target of *outsourcing* to the inside of our cameras, computers, telephones, *tablets*? Because at a certain point, we no longer use our external memories exclusively for excessive records, we use them for everything. And we just increasingly record, photograph, film, without stopping and in transit, and we give up on what to do with the results.

Hence my skewed reaction. When I travel I increasingly insist on confining myself to smaller and smaller nooks in the vast new place I should be discovering. In extreme cases, I can spend days at the same outdoor terrace, in the same alleyway, immune to external temptations. It's just that I at least want to get to know that particular little corner, force the mind to assimilate, not delegate to the instant photograph. Perhaps that way I can always carry it with me, without help.

Agonda Beach, Goa, India 24 Apr 2013

We were heading to Palolem beach at high speed on a simple moped. The sinewy road was in complete darkness, lit only by the occasional vehicle that blinded us from the opposite direction. No helmet, in shorts and slippers, any driving mistake would have been disastrous, hundreds of kilometers from any possible assistance. I'm afraid of motorbikes, but in Goa there is no alternative. It's at these times, and only at these times, that I have to trust in providence. Nothing like a slight panic to give you a little faith.

Just a few hours ago, the driver was a complete stranger to me. In some way, these last few days have been a silent revelation. Agonda beach was recommended to me by some solicitous Goans, on two separate occasions, and I trusted in whatever chance had in store for me. After some *online* research I wound up at a cabin facing directly onto the beach. The lack of tourists marks the end of the season. At the restaurant, also perched on the beach, I've been almost always alone or accompanied by one or two lone couples. I've gotten into the habit of combining a swim in the sea with sunbathing and with work, as the latter never leaves me completely in peace. But the indispensable *wifi* connection is temperamental. And they change the *password* often.

Spending too much time alone can be dangerous. There are internal voices that become more audacious, and narrow us down into mental constructions that don't allow us to pause. For those, you don't need to *log in* and there is no *offline* switch. I try to accept experiencing things without sharing them with anyone, I try to not mind feelings of longing, or searching on the horizon for something that I know isn't there. I dive into the choppy sea and upon resurfacing look around, only to confirm that I'm alone on three kilometers of beach. The first instinct is to ask the reason for being there. And to know that the trick is to not ask any questions.

The sea becomes an authoritative presence, by virtue of the relentless hammering of the waves. At night it remains there, irremovable but in a constant spread out friction, a wall of ceaseless sound that defines the limits of my room and, at the moment, of my world. It's the sea that is slowly thinning me out little by little, shaking off futility and elliptical considerations. As the days go by, you simply begin to be, with few worries about what should be.

"Are you single? Also, are you gay?" The two questions, that leave me in an amusingly euphoric state, with the uncontrollable laughter of surprise, come from my host. I hadn't noticed him, but in the restaurant, when the network wasn't working and I was asking for a new *password*, I got up with the computer and headed to reception. "I can give you the password, come here." From a side table, an Indian man who looked about my age was calling me. I hadn't yet seen him here, and he

looked to be in transit, with a *laptop* and some books on the table. He told me he was one of the partners of the little compound of *bungalows*, a lawyer from Mumbai that had decided to invest in the Goan coast. I told him I was here just because. He made himself immediately available to show me some places that were not immediately visible in the tourist guides, but suddenly he stopped, smiled with a smirk in his eye and shot out: "Wait a minute, are you single? Are you gay?"

I always like to speak with people who verbalize those things I don't have the courage to say. And perhaps this clarification was necessary for us to move on to another phase of our interaction, more in tune with each other's interests. As for the slightly homophobic tone, for now I'll let it go, swept temporarily under the rug of cultural tolerance. "Yes, no." A laugh and onward. "To tell you the truth I only asked because I knew the answer already." A smart aleck, this one.

He has an interesting shape. Short and very dark, despite classifying himself as light-skinned, he looks like an Indian version of a young Al Pacino, always with a mocking smile on his lips. He says he wants to show me Palolem beach, that's where the bars are, full of madness and amusement, just off the road. At the end of the day he'll come looking for me. There goes the aquatic Zen introspection. Al Pacino made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

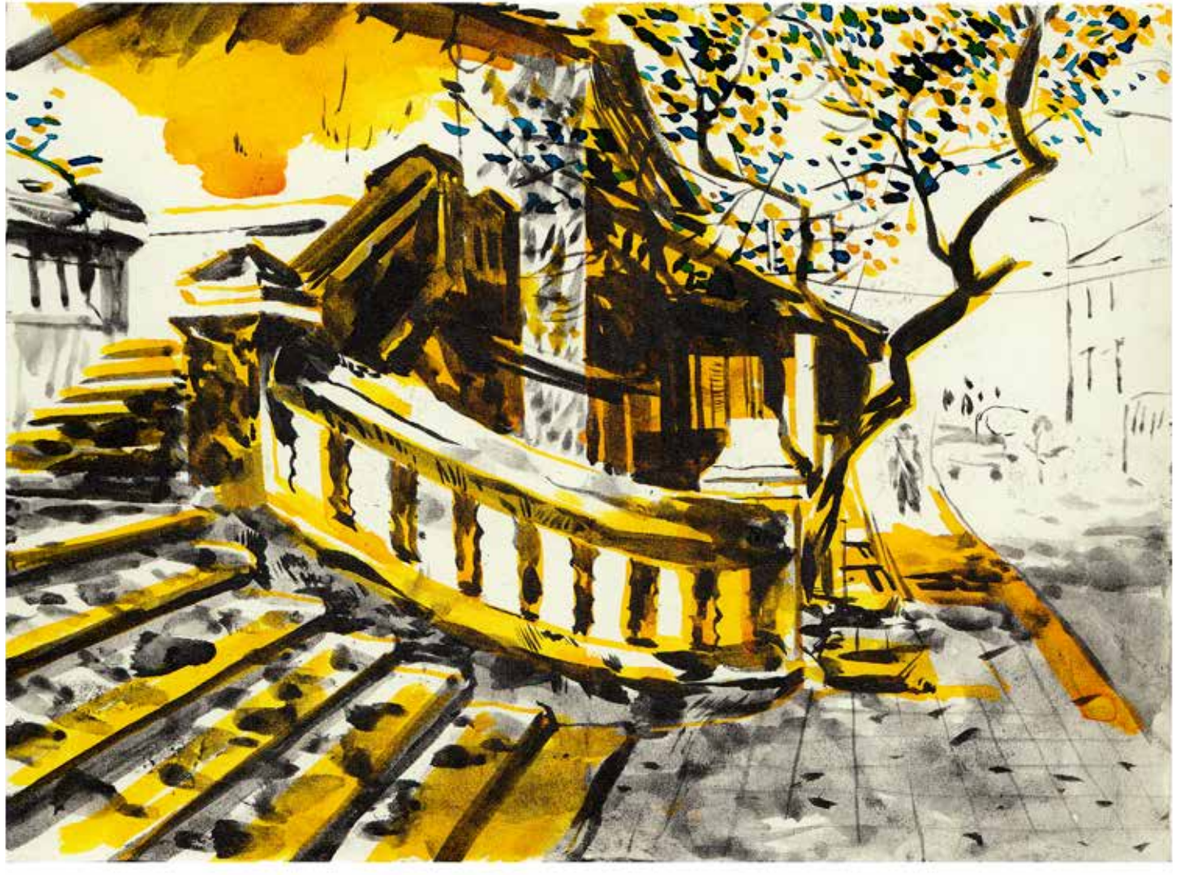
"So, do you want the car or the bike?" I look at the robust black car and at the fragile moped and I try to visualize the dark trajectory in both directions, one of which will probably be fueled by more than just gas. At least the car must have airbags. "No, no, the bike is safer. The car is too big for the road, it's more dangerous." I suppose some safety logic is also subject to the local customs of each country. It's all in the hands of Ganesha, the remover of obstacles.

Hanging onto the moped, I try to listen to Rahul philosophize, about Goa, India, women, spirituality and the Summer. Forgetting to keep his eyes on the road, he keeps looking back while trying to explain some sort of unified theory about the foreign woman, his yelling muffled by the speed. "André, you have to come here in high season! Lots of yoga girls! I love yoga girls! They are sooooo complicated!!!" He laughs at the Yoga certificates issued in 15 days, at the futile longing of the West for Eastern supermarket enlightenment. At people who come here searching with no time to discover.

Truthfully, this little tour to Palolem could only be by motorbike. This way, our laughter can run freely among the vegetation enveloped by the night, giving us the impression that the coconut trees are laughing with us. The laughter makes me close my eyes and relax, letting myself be driven. "Tonight, Andre, I want to see some people! I want to see some complex faces!"

Put like that, everything seems simple.

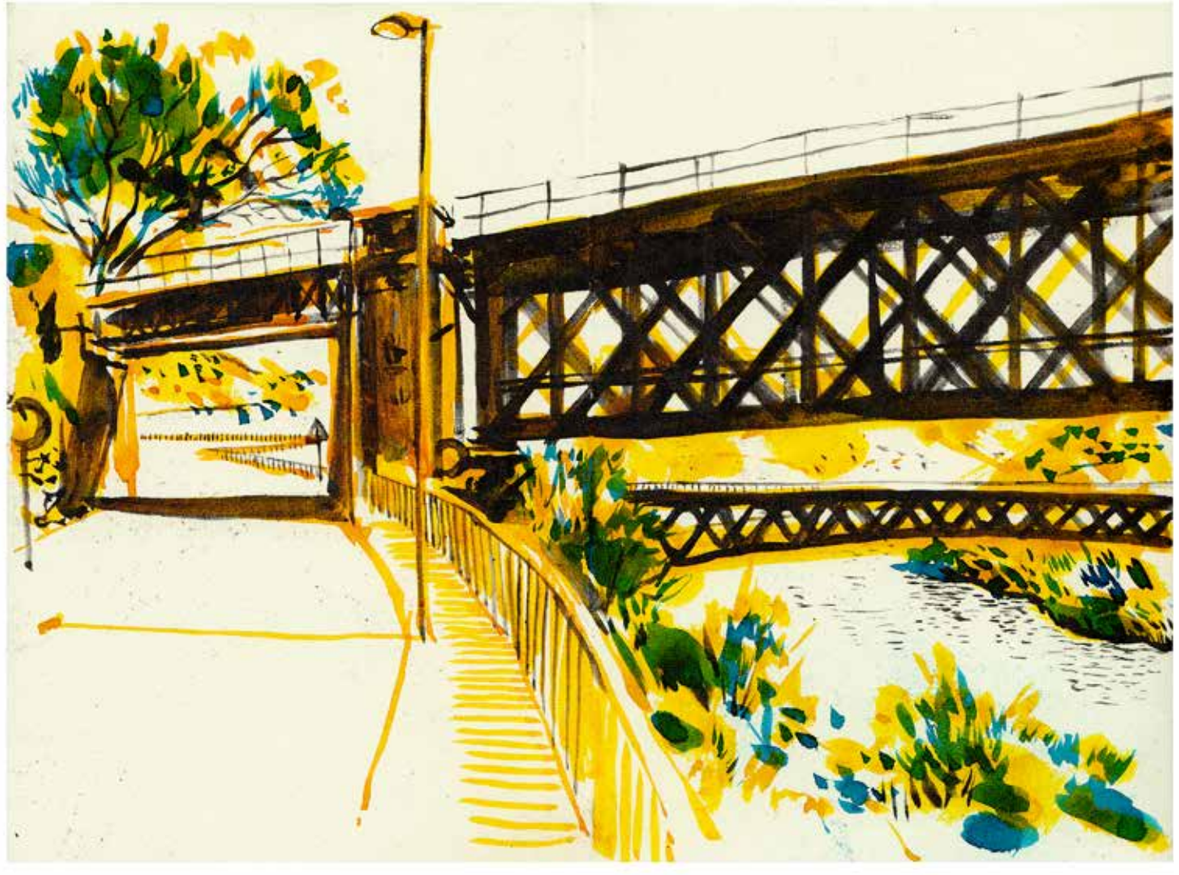
Imaculada Conceição Church, Panjim, Goa, India 05 May 2013



Emídio Garcia Street, Panjim, Goa, India 06 May 2013

República Hotel, Panjim, Goa, India 06 May 2013

Epilogue



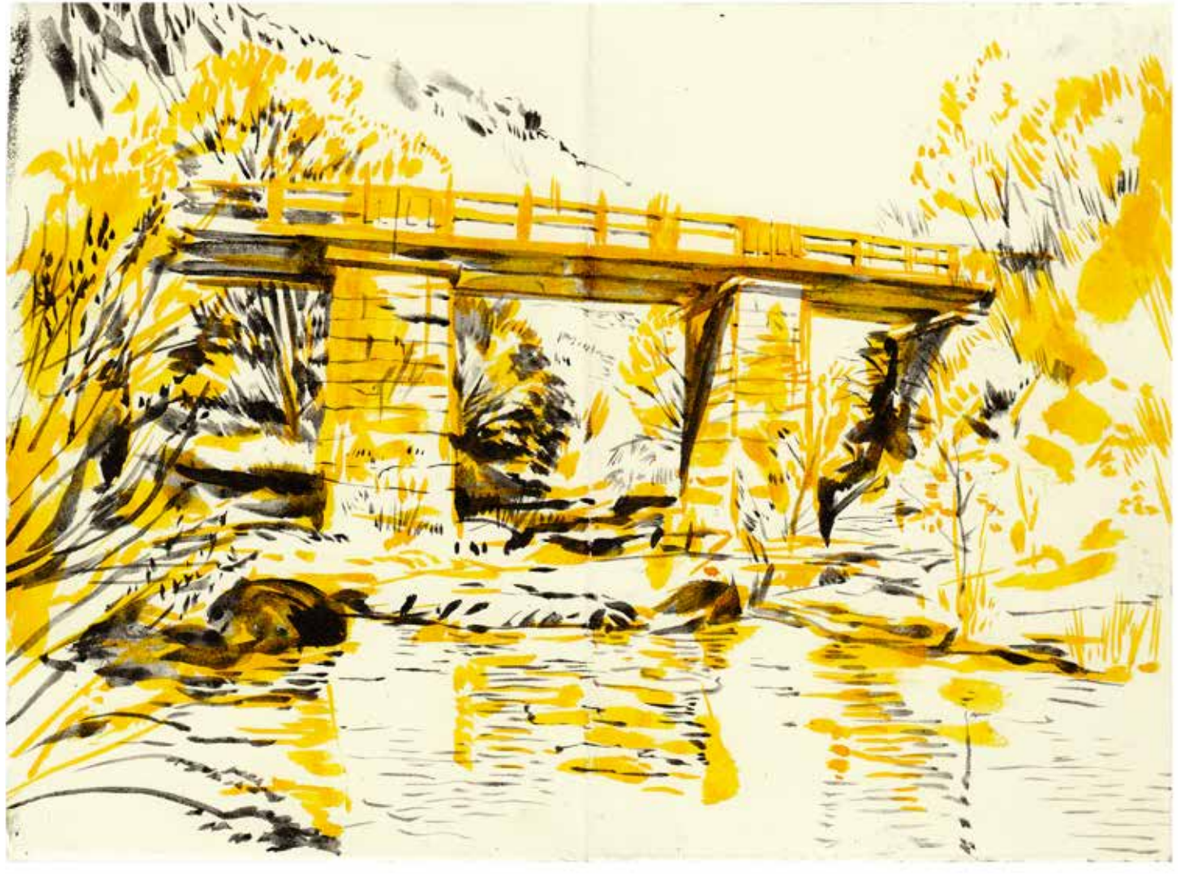
International Railway Bridge, Barca d'Alva, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Roman Bridge, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal

Aguiar River, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal

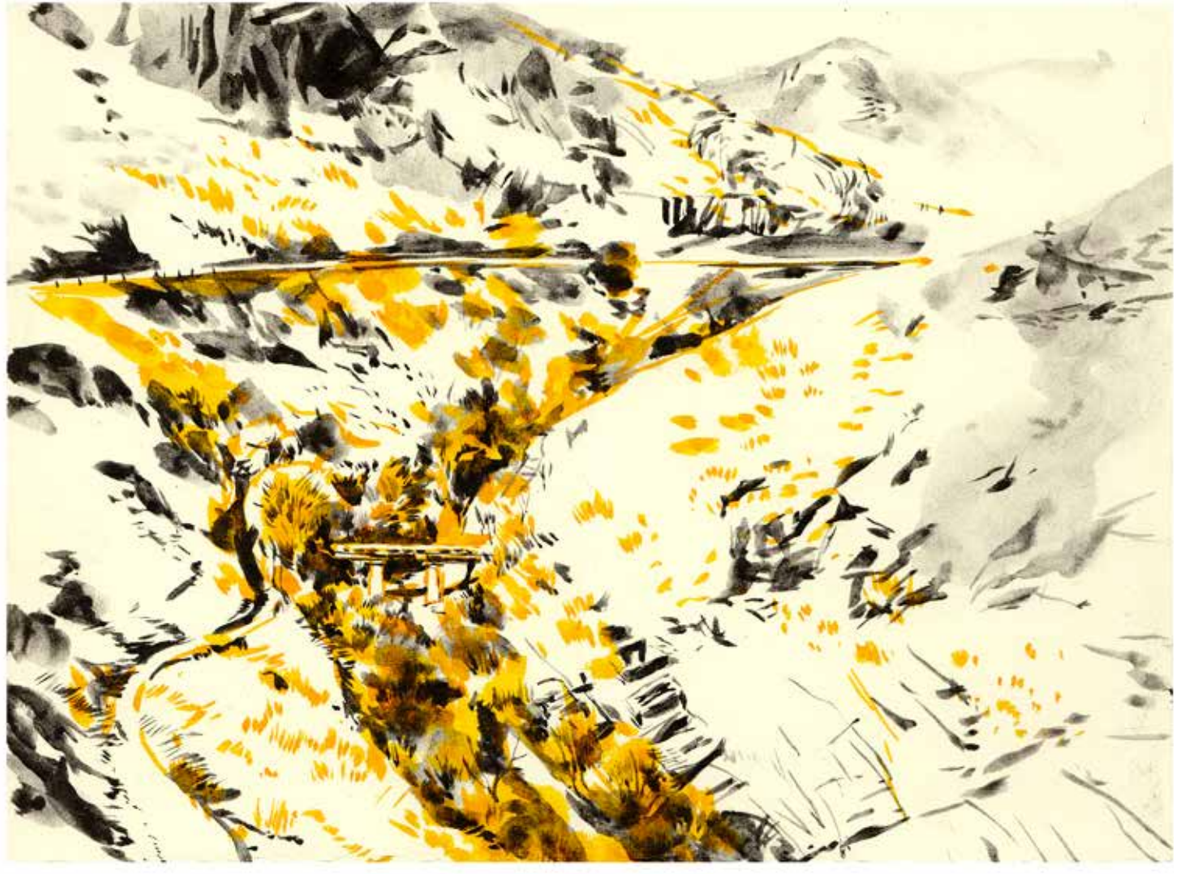
Medieval Fountain, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Dry Landscape, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013



Alminhas Bridge, Ribeira do Mosteiro, Trás-os-Montes, Portugal 25 Aug 2013

Côa River, Cinco Vilas Village, Portugal 25 Aug 2013



Endnotes

i Gil Vicente here refers to a bar named after one of the first great Portuguese playwrights and poets. His nickname was "The Troubador".

ii Any English words in italics reflect the fact that the author used an English word in the original Portuguese text, either because it is used as slang or because there is no translation available in Portuguese.

iii Fado is a Portuguese musical genre which can be traced to at least the 19th century. The word itself can be loosely translated as "destiny" or "fate".

iv Caneta vs Caneto – Portuguese nouns utilize gender determination. Masculine nouns generally end in "o" and feminine nouns in "a". "Caneta" is a feminine noun meaning "a pen" (the writing instrument).

v CPLP – The Community of Portuguese Language Countries. Formed in 1996; its aim is to further cooperation among its member nations.

vi BSE wine – Stands for "Branco Seco Especial" (Special Dry White), and is a wine from the Setubal wine region of Portugal.

vii Portugal dos Pequeninos – A park for children, situated in the region of Coimbra, which is contains miniature versions of Portugal's most famous monuments and landmarks.

viii Sapato – "shoe" in Portuguese

ix Manteiga – "butter" in Portuguese

x Alentejo – Southern-central region of Portugal

xi Beiras – Region of Portugal located between the Douro and Tagus rivers.

xii Rua Augusta – Famous shopping street in the "Baixa" neighborhood of Lisbon (see below).

xiii Beira Alta – Portuguese province in the North of Portugal.

xiv Fátima – Portuguese town where the Shrine of Fátima is located. Legend has it that it was here that the Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children in 1917.

xv Escalhão – Village in the North of Portugal.

xvi Linda de Souza–A reference to a Portuguese pop singer named Teolinda de Sousa, born in 1948, who emigrated to France and became well-known within the Portuguese immigrant community as Linda de Suza.

xvii "Terreiro do Paço" (Palace Terrace) or "Praça do Comércio" (Commerce Square) is a square located near the Tagus river in Lisbon.

xviii Baixa – Central commercial Lisbon neighborhood bordering the Terreiro do Paço and hosting numerous shops and restaurants.

Author´s Notes::

All the drawings in this book were done on site at the place they portray, by hand, in pen, acrylic paint, soluble graphite and watercolors, and reproduced here to scale, with the exception of the images on the cover, back cover and page 132, which are slightly larger in the original. At times, location and time limitations dictated that I complete some details from memory, but no photos were used as a reference, nor were any digital means used to manipulate the images. What you see is what I set to paper, with no correction.

On the other hand, the texts are an a posteriori record of events, situations and reflections, the translation of which into drawings would have been much too morose and inapropriate to the context in which they were lived.

In the word "abysmo", it is the shape of the "y"
that gives it depth, darkness, mystery...To write it with a Latin
"i" is to shut the mouth of the abyss and transform it into a banal surface.
Teixeira de Pascoaes

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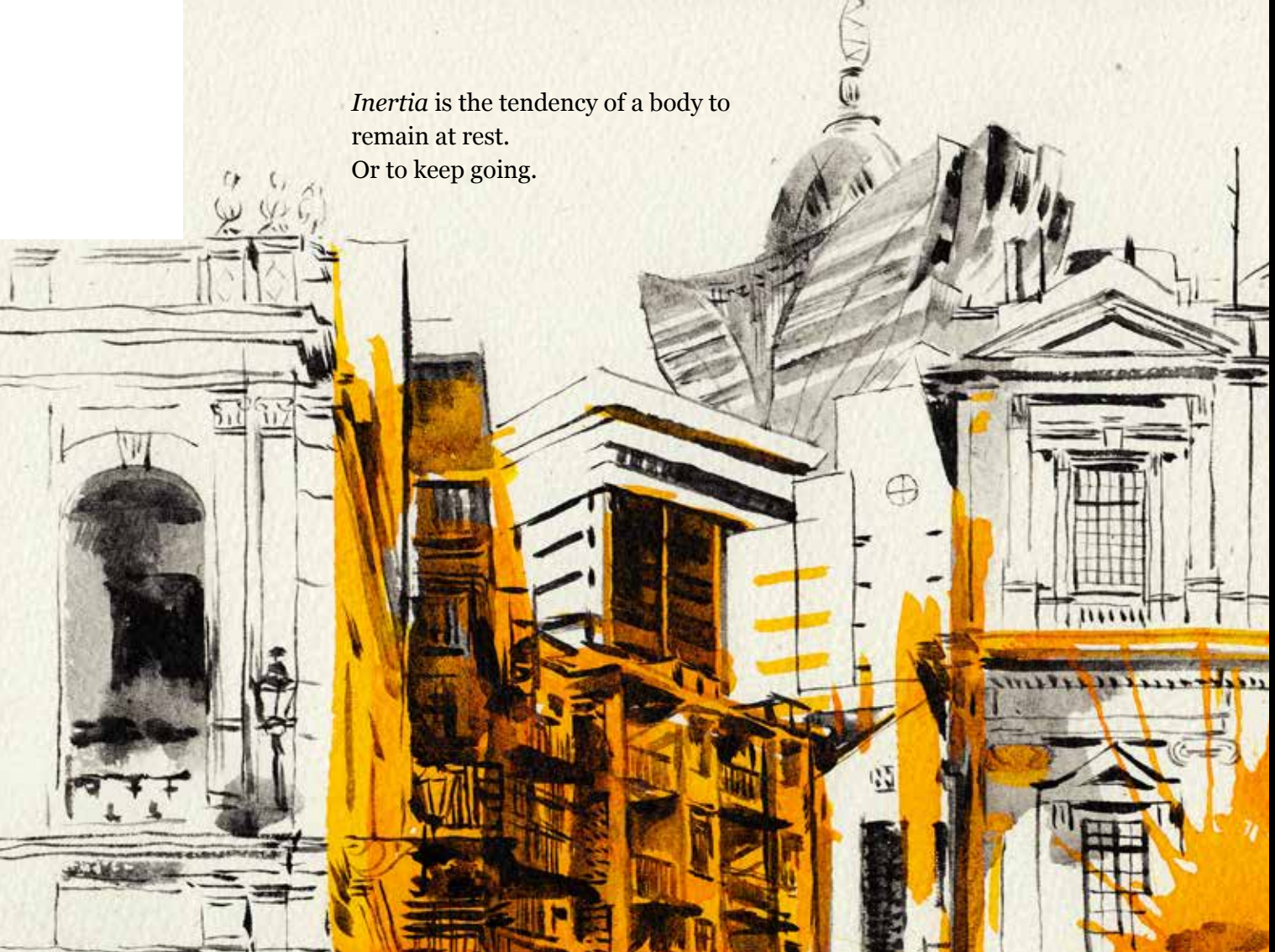
Inertia is the tendency of a body to
remain at rest.
Or to keep going.



CONCLUSION

The Destination

[…] the dissemination of ideas across language boundaries necessarily requires translation.

Martin and Pickford, ***Travel Narratives in Translation, 1750-1830: Nationalism, Ideology, Gender***

In the introduction to this translation work-project, I revealed how this process began for me; how my shared journey with Carrilho began. Throughout, it has been a shared journey in that I needed to interview him several times on specific details, and was also dependent on him for the final version of the translation itself – the layout, design, etc.

My process during this work-project began with the translation itself. As my work was primarily the translation itself, and this text is not a dissertation, I did not read any supporting texts prior to finishing my translation, as I didn't want to translate from theory, but rather translate and observe my process, and only afterward realize and theorize my options. Obviously, the translation process was not entirely "innocent", since the knowledge I acquired during the curricular phase of the Master program gave me a feel for what translation problems might arise, allowing me to be a much more informed and prepared translator than in the past. I did not; however, only analyze and comment on my own translation process, but also on the book content itself, as it is a rich source of the various theoretical bases we discussed in the first chapter – globalization, post-colonialism and the "post" postmodern condition.

In addition to looking backwards and at the present, I am also here looking towards the possible future of the work going forward. As previously stated, though not thus far a popular academic discipline in American universities, Travel Writing is an ever-expanding genre for the current climate of travel abroad, and especially for Portuguese Travel Literature such as this text, given the current fascination with Portugal. Our intention is to publish this book in the USA. As stated in the introduction, Carrilho collaborates with *Vanity Fair* magazine in the US. He is therefore well-positioned to cross the bridge from illustrator to author of an illustrated literary travel book within the market.

My own personal aim here was to help divulge the infinitely rich Portuguese culture in such a way that an American reader will feel both at home because of the fluid and fluent American language and, also, somewhat like a traveler, experiencing the source culture's flavors and colors in a way that seems organic and enriching.

As for my own future process or work within the field of Translation Studies, a possible topic of study might be the interdisciplinariness of translation. The idea of an interdisciplinary study interests me due to its relationship to the idea of collaboration. As the founder and director of an international not for profit arts organization called *roguewaves* (roguewaves.net), my mission states that roguewaves, a natural phenomenon, are giant waves that occur when two or more smaller waves combine. This is the core idea of the project -— that two or more concepts, theories, individuals, etc., can become more powerful and effective when combined in the spirit of collaboration. Therefore, this topic of study – interdisciplinariness – makes sense as part of my larger body of work. As Cronin states: "[…] it is not just the translating subjects of the discipline that are engaged in a nomadic practice as they translate; rather the discipline itself is nomadic in its disciplinary journeying from subject area to subject area." (Cronin, 2000: 104)

And so, this part of my journey is concluded; hopefully opening doorways and tracing paths to future interludes on the roads of academia and life.

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-postmodernism

ANNEX

INÉRCIA
André Carrilho

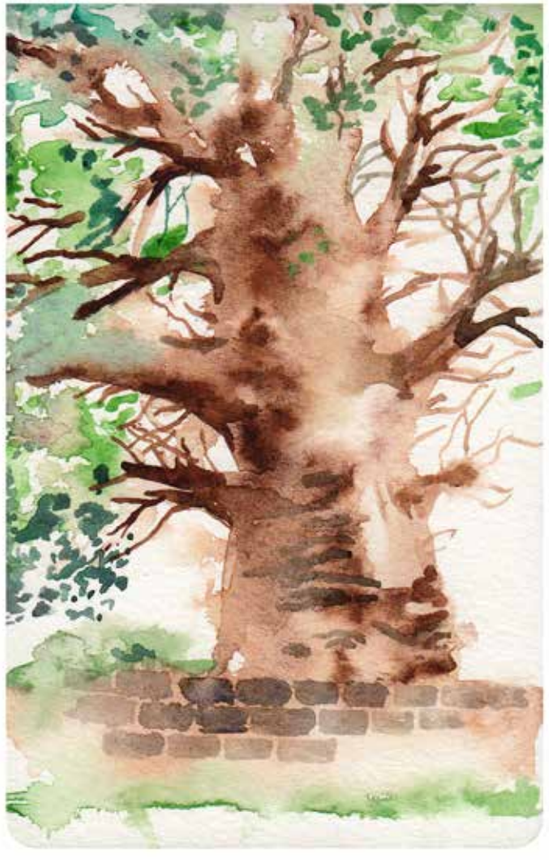
INÉRCIA

André Carrilho

Keep a diary, someday it may keep you

Mae West

André Carrilho foi ali ao Cabo das Tormentas, ver se encontrava Boa Esperança.



Embondeiro, Pemba, Moçambique 20 Jan 2012

Praia Wimbe, Pemba, Moçambique 21 Jan 2012

O alpendre da Sarah, Pemba, Moçambique 23 Jan 2012

Acordar em Maputo depois de uma noite no Gil Vicente a ouvir um guitarrista *black* a tocar *heavy metal*, um puto vocalista *soul* genial completamente bêbado, um baixista MC com a moca da sua vida e um baterista à séria, virtuoso. Nota mental, aqui será poiso regular. Fazer mala e de abalada para Joanesburgo, espera, e Hong Kong, transbordo para o *ferry*, e Macau, 20 e tal horas, um filme bom e dois maus depois da partida. Comparecer num jantar de cerimónia do Festival Literário de Macau, conversar com escritores portugueses de gabarito (nomes ocultados para manter a privacidade dos ditos) e seguir para concerto de fado. Sentir saudades da pátria mãe. Desvio de escritores portugueses para o Bellini no Venitian, que agora é o Playboy Club, e beber Carlsbergs servidas por meninas com orelhas de coelho e caudas de pompom ao som de Prince e do «I Will Survive», tocados por um grupo de cantores e músicos americanos importados, multifacetados no seu talento inconsequente.

Táxi para casa, a pensar que algo de fundamental mudou na sua percepção do mundo.

Deitado na areia, embalado pela leve maresia nocturna, os pirilampos são estrelas com propósitos obscuros.

A DEZ METROS DE PROFUNDIDADE O CHÃO DE CORAL ACABA, DESCENDO abruptamente. Em frente, uma enorme parede de olhos atentos e reflexos prateados espera, ao desafio. Avançamos e a parede desloca-se à nossa volta, granular, transformando-se numa perfeita cúpula, rodeando-nos, mantendo uma distância de segurança. Usando o fluxo de ar nos pulmões, controlamos a flutuação, de modo a mantermo-nos estacionários. Ali ficamos, num diálogo mudo de instintos, no centro de uma bolha gigante de seres vivos. Biologia, ciência, investigação, desporto radical... Tudo bem. Mas arquitectos, poetas e filósofos também aqui deviam estar.

Praia de Haad Salad, Koh Phangan, Tailândia 08 Mar 2012

Improvisa-se. A caminho do aeroporto a estrada é flanqueada por bairros de lata. As fachadas, de cores primárias, garridas, passam aceleradas, e pelo canto do olho distinguem-se *slogans* e substantivos familiares. Percebe-se: marcas de detergentes e operadoras de telecomunicações pagam aos moradores que tenham a sorte de habitar uma parede virada para a estrada, e pintam-na com logótipos e publicidades. O resultado é africano, mas a matéria-prima gráfica é ocidental, doutro hemisfério económico.

"Vês? Foi aqui." O meu pai tira a mão do volante e aponta uma mancha de asfalto mais escura no meio da estrada, antes de passar por cima dela sem abrandar. Lembro-me do que me contou ontem ao almoço.

O ano passado uns aumentaram o preço do pão e outros, mais numerosos, foram para a rua. Barricaram ruas, incendiaram pneus. "Mas pneus ardem?" "Claro, são feitos de combustível; pegas fogo e ficam ali a arder." (Um dos problemas de crescer numa sociedade de consumo tecnológica é o constante desconhecimento do que realmente são as coisas feitas. Adiante.) Os poderes que podiam retaliaram com o que tinham, e o que estava à mão era gás lacrimogéneo, arma de dispersão cujos danos podem ser minimizados lavando a cara com água. Durante alguns dias, porém, ninguém arredou pé e surgiu um novo comércio. Começaram a ver-se pessoas com alguidares de água à beira da estrada. Por cinco paus podia-se lavar a cara, limpar as lágrimas do gás e voltar à insurreição.

Já no aeroporto decidimos embrulhar a mala em celofane protector, para prevenir roubos, antes de a despachar no *check-in*. No final o funcionário coloca uma fita de cor vermelho vivo, sem função aparente. Claro, tem o logótipo da maior operadora de telecomunicações do país.

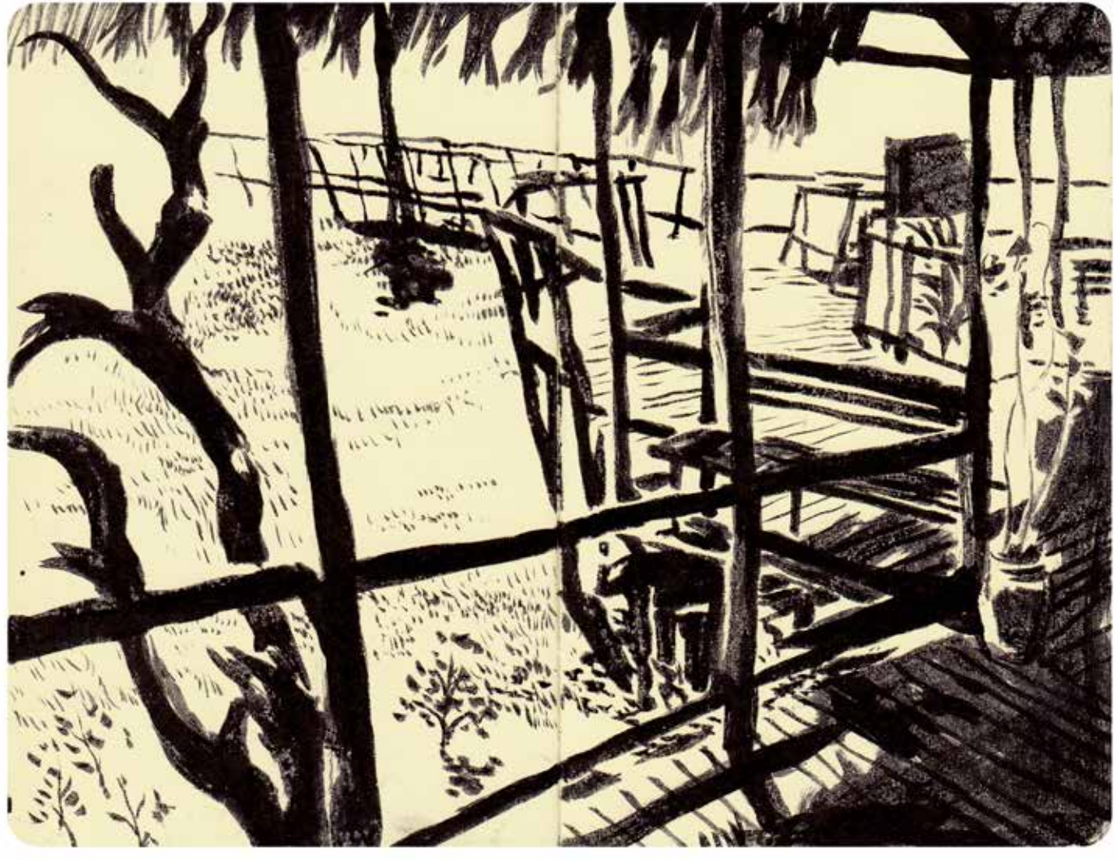
Em Moçambique até a paz de espírito é patrocinada.

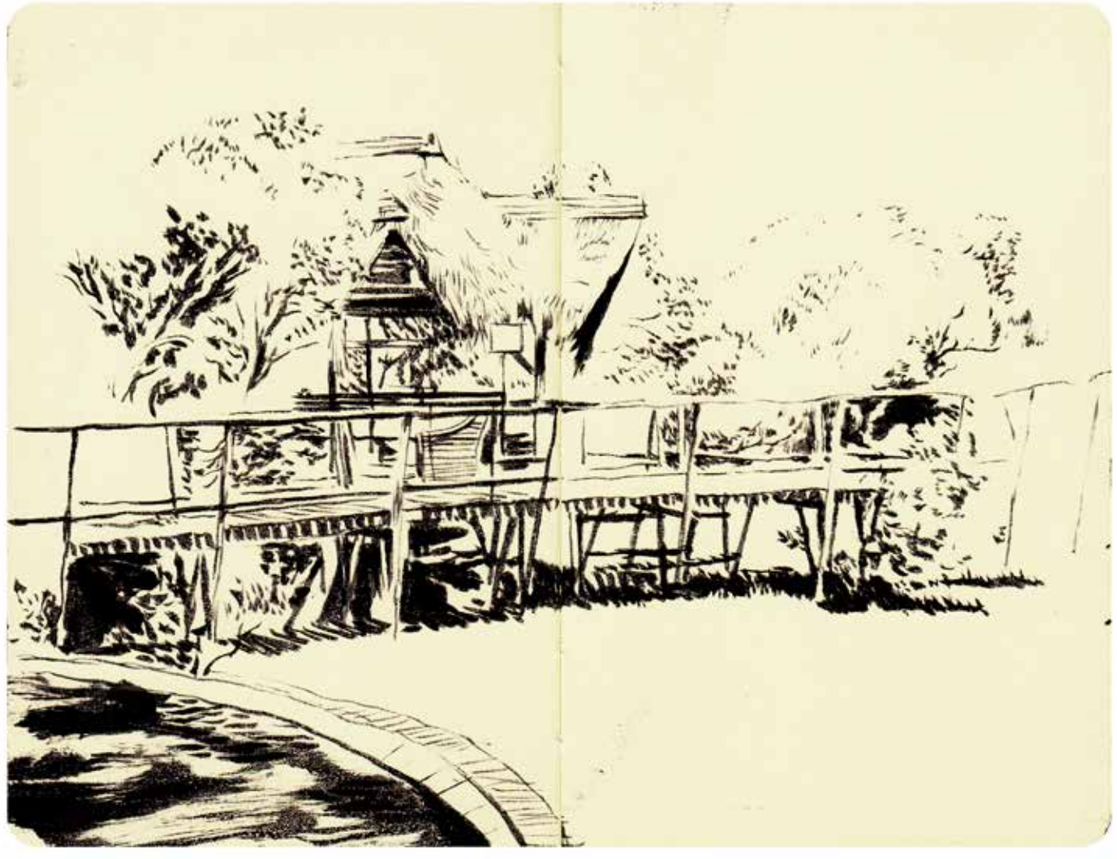
Desta vez foi diferente. A praia a perder de vista, escaldada pelo sol, e o mar, ondulado, robusto. À nossa espera, longe, à beira de água, está uma lancha insuflável, de dois motores. Somos duas guias, um grupo de dois homens e uma mulher, e eu.

A guia de mergulho mais experiente, flanqueada pela sua colega, ambas louras e com sotaque sul-africano, jovens, explicam em inglês alguns procedimentos e o percurso que vamos fazer. Pegando num livro amarrotado, com imagens de vida marinha, uma delas aponta os retratos dos seres que poderemos encontrar. "Estes quatro aqui convém não tocar em qualquer circunstância, são venenosos." Isto interessa-me. "E o que acontece se formos picados?" "Bom este aqui" – e aponta para o mais feio, nem parece um peixe, é mais um pedregulho – "se te picar morres em sete segundos." A outra também sabe umas coisas. Mostra um peixe que se apresenta sem rodeios, tem espinhos vermelhos e brancos. "Com este talvez sobrevivas, mas é muito pouco provável. Morres num dia ou dois." Rimo-nos. Pergunto-me qual será a maneira mais estúpida de morrer, picado por um animal subaquático no Oceano Índico ou dentro de um carro, na A1, direcção Lisboa-Porto. E qual será estatisticamente mais provável. A A1, claro. Definitivamente é a mais estúpida.

A mulher do grupo de três faz a pergunta óbvia: "não podemos antes ir ver uns tubarões?"

Debaixo de água seguimos a líder, que leva consigo o cabo da bóia de sinalização. A outra vem atrás de nós, vigilante. Tento tirar umas fotos, mas é difícil. Ainda não estou automatizado; muita coisa em que pensar e a que estar atento. Equalizar os ouvidos, regular o ar nos pulmões para manter o nível de flutuação, não subir demasiado, não tocar em nada, respirar regularmente, ignorar uma leve cãibra, não perder o grupo de vista, lidar com a água que entra na máscara, olha aquele peixe, espera aí que isto agora sobe, deixa cá ver quanto resta de ar... Concentro-me num pequeno grupo de peixes que parece indeciso, anda lateralmente de um lado para o outro. A guia tinha avisado, neste local a água imprime a tudo o movimento pendular das ondas. E eu, desconfiado, andava a tentar fixar a minha posição em relação ao solo, despendendo energia e precioso oxigénio. Os peixes, mais sábios, deixam-se ir, para lá, para cá, para lá, para cá. Têm razão; relaxo e junto-me à valsa. Tal como a pintar uma aguarela, é melhor deixar a água fazer o que quer. Posso nunca vir a ser peixe, mas vou tentar aprender a ser tinta.





Tinha de ser, é sempre assim, que raiva. Ando numa ânsia de registos, fotografias, desenhos, vídeos, textos. Para esta loucura arranjei um método, uma lógica, que seria aborrecido explicar. Basta saber que o resultado prático é filmar todas as descolagens e todas as aterragens dos aviões que apanho. Encosto o telefone à janela e gravo. Lanço a rede a ver se apanho algo de interessante. E há dias fugiu-me um peixe graúdo, assim, deste tamanho!

Seria mais um cardume. Enorme, de pessoas. Aterrámos em Inhambane, após escala em Vilanculos, sem acidente de percurso a assinalar. Na pista, a caminho do lugar de estacionamento, decido parar de filmar. Paisagem igual a tantas outras, alcatrão da pista, relva da praxe, asa do avião que já tinha filmado toda a viagem para me abstrair do estado da mesma, enfim. Guardo o telefone e começamos a dar uma curva, apertada, súbita. E a janela, ao virar com o avião, revela de repente o terminal de destino. À frente do edifício está o que parece ser a cidade em peso. Uma muralha compacta de pessoas na fronteira do asfalto, uns a cantar, outros a dançar, aqui um grupo vestido de branco, ali um outro de vermelho, todos a olhar para nós, bandas, escolas, gentes. Uma recepção digna de alta patente.

O avião é pequeno, a hélices, não tem classes. Para quem será este estendal? Levanta-se o homem do primeiro lugar, dois à minha frente. Está de fato e gravata, anacrónico, devia ter desconfiado. A porta do avião abre e deixa entrar calor, música e gritos. O homem sai e nenhum outro passageiro se mexe. Eu não quero ir a seguir, tenho horror às luzes da ribalta. Mas lá terá de ser, a maior parte das pessoas não sairá do avião, que segue de volta para Maputo. Esta escala é de poucos minutos.

Desço com mais duas mulheres as escadas do avião e a multidão olha, mais silenciosa. Há uma fronteira que as pessoas que nos recebem em bloco não se atrevem a transpor, o limite do alcatrão da pista. Enquanto o pisar estarei na mira dos seus olhares, debaixo do foco da sua atenção. O branco dos seus olhos segue-me, dissecante.

Não sei o que pensou o dignitário que vinham esperar, mas eu percebi. Em Inhambane como em tantos outros lugares, para se chegar e pertencer à paisagem tem de se sair quanto antes do alcatrão, e pisar a terra batida.

Havia aquele filme do Bertolucci, *Um Chá no Deserto*, base-ado no livro do Paul Bowles. John Malkovich, Debra Winger. Há uma altura em que um deles fala da diferença entre o turista e o viajante. "Um turista sabe quando volta para casa, o viajante não." Ou algo do género. Luto com esses dois rótulos e tento encaixar-me num deles. Por mais que os estique, não dá. Ambos têm algo que eu não tenho: disponibilidade para o que encontram no caminho. A minha é limitada, continuo a trabalhar, muitas vezes não tenho tempo para olhar a paisagem. Trato os sítios por onde passo como se fossem a minha casa, sem obrigações de visitar o monumento mais próximo. Sem olhar para um calendário ou para um guia de viagem.

Quando muito serei um nómada. Esse não faz turismo nem viaja. A sua casa está espraiada, estica-se por alguns sítios familiares. E volta a eles regularmente, ao sabor dos elementos. (Nota para *cartoon*: um nómada a fazer turismo. Deve haver uma piada aí algures.)

No lufa-lufa da passagem, muitas vezes não reparo em coisas em que devia. O desenho ajuda-me a parar e a observar, dá-me tempo com a envolvente. Tem laivos de meditação. Costumava achar que ou se vivia ou se registava o que se vive, que parar para desenhar ou tirar uma fotografia cortava o fio a qualquer experiência. Agora é diferente. Ao desenhar, olho com um pouco

mais de profundidade. Paro tudo, sento-me com o que me rodeia e registo. Não penso em mais nada. Asseguro-me de que no papel fica uma memória, mais perene do que outras.

Tenho de pagar a conta e fico a sós com o encarregado da recepção, ambos momentaneamente reféns do meu cartão, da rede, da tecnologia. Preciso de uma caneta para assinar o talão. Ele quebra o silêncio "É português?" A pergunta espanta-me sempre, pensei que era óbvio. "Sou." "Posso fazer-lhe uma pergunta?" Há alguma timidez nas suas maneiras, como se fosse revelar algo íntimo. "Diz-se 'posso pedir uma caneta emprestada?' ou 'posso pedir uma caneta emprestado?'" Pois é, esqueço-me sempre de que isto da comunidade de países de língua portuguesa é uma construção que necessita a sua manutenção. Nesta zona de Moçambique o português é segunda língua. A primeira é a língua indígena, que varia com os territórios de cada povo, indiferentes às fronteiras rabiscadas por brancos. Os que trabalham na hotelaria têm de aprender a fala dos visitantes, sejam ou não compatriotas.

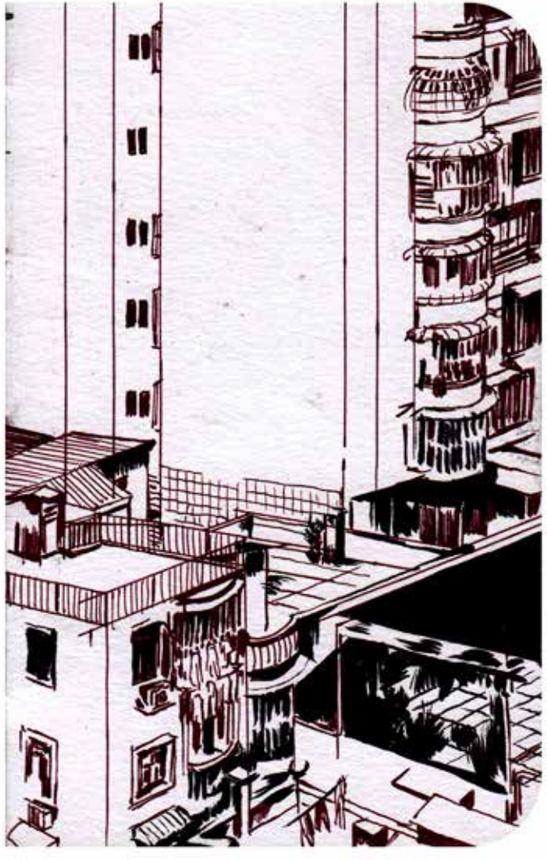
No transporte para o aeroporto o condutor mete conversa. Deve ser um daqueles dias. Pergunta-me se gostei do Flamingo e se foi a primeira vez. Digo que muito e que sim e acrescento que não será a última. "Sabe, agora a maré não estava muito alta, aí ainda é mais bonito." Fico baralhado. "Mas não estava alta hoje de manhã?" "Sim, mas a semana passada estava mais alta, e esta semana ficou mais baixa. O que quer dizer que para a semana vai subir outra vez, até ficar mais alta. Vai mudando." Pergunto-me se terá a ver com o ciclo lunar, nunca tinha pensado nisso.

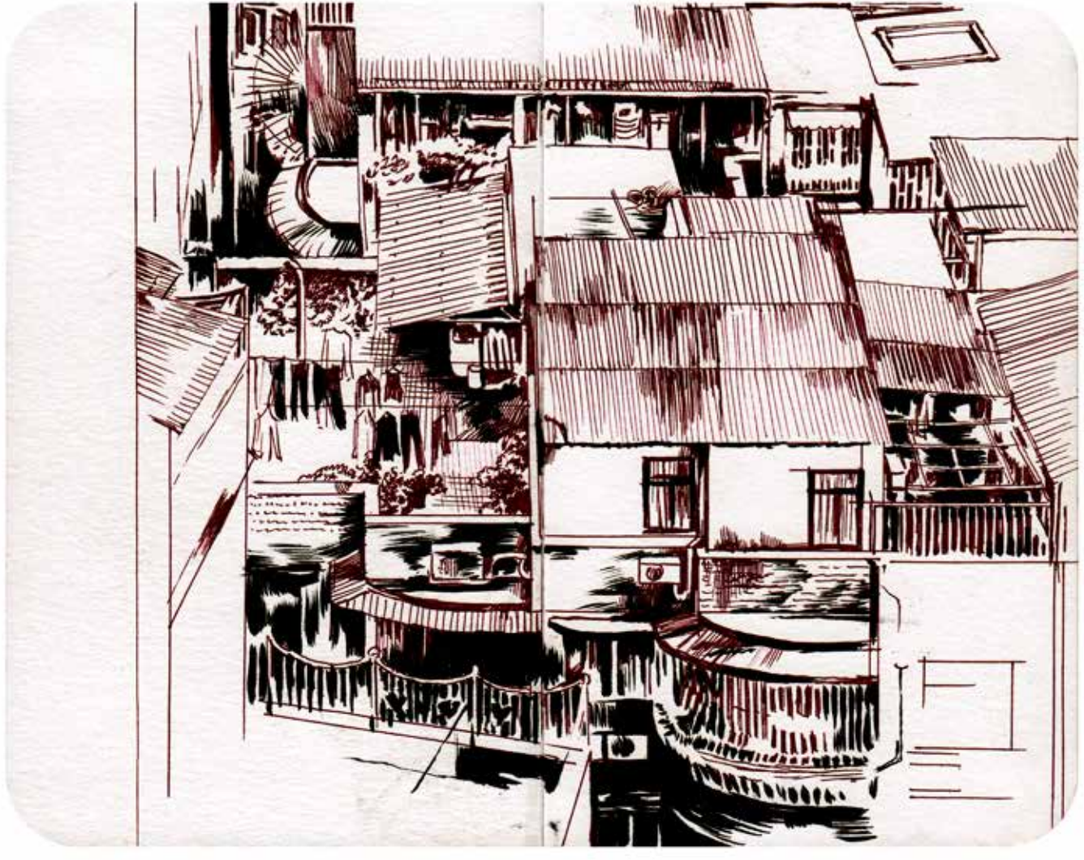
Ele também desconfia de que tem alguma coisa a ver com a Lua, afinal estamos a falar de marés. "Quando é assim, a água fica cá em cima, muito perto do chão, quarenta centímetros, e fica tudo ainda mais bonito." Deve ser verdade, consigo imaginar os passadiços e os alpendres, abrindo caminho ao nível do mar, produzindo uma leve ilusão de óptica.

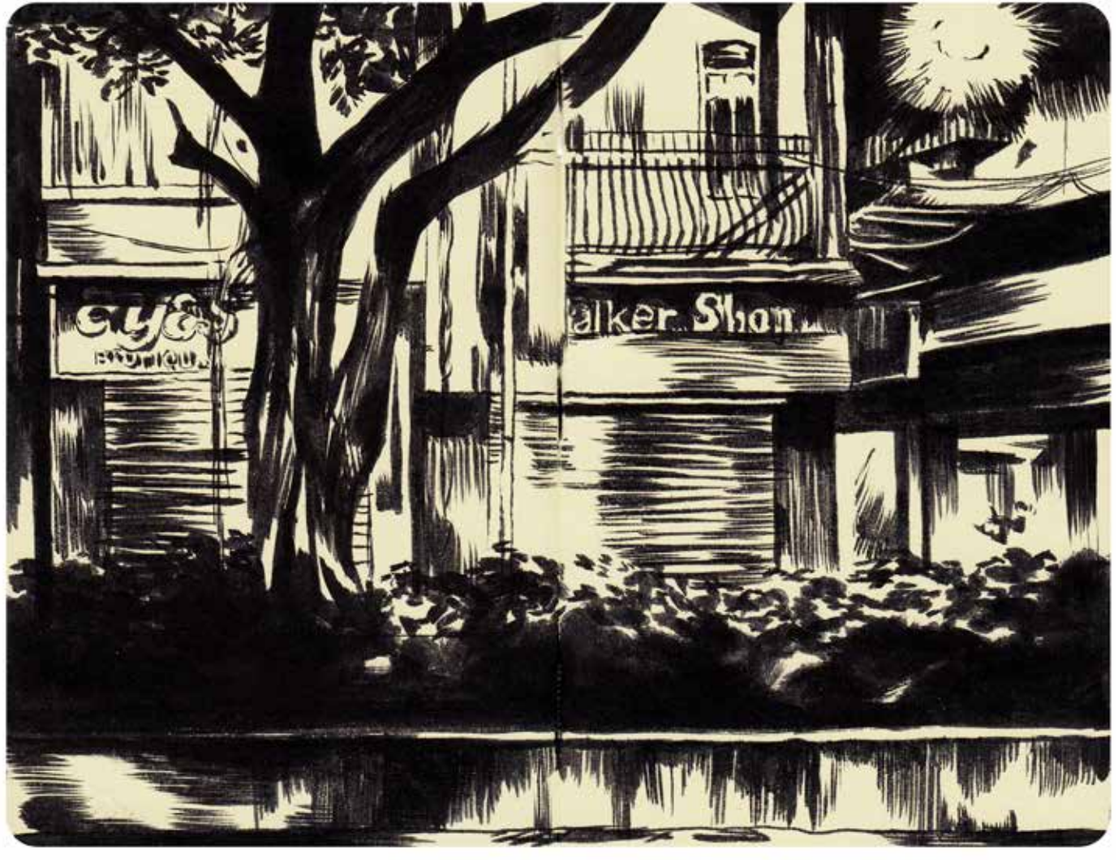
Agora terei mesmo de voltar. Chamem-me petulante, mas já me imagino a andar sobre a água.

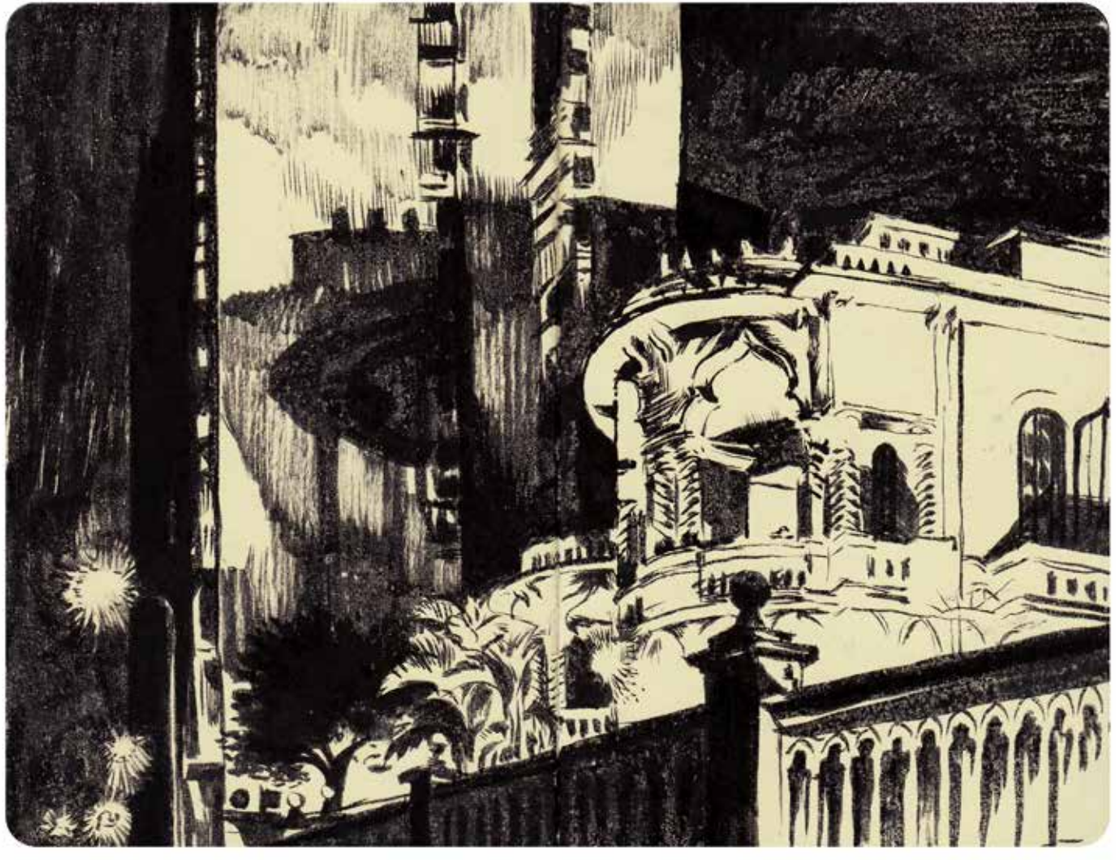
De volta a Maputo, descubro que a força da gravidade da Lua se combina periodicamente com a do Sol para criar marés mais altas. Mas as minhas investigações em rede são interrompidas. Parece que uns colegas de faculdade do meu pai me querem conhecer. Jantarada, assim de rompante, tem de ser. À mesa, atulhada de iguarias e de professores de arquitectura, a língua portuguesa encontra os seus principais representantes. Um professor do Brasil, uma angolana, dois moçambicanos, três portugueses. O anfitrião, branco mas autóctone, começa a explicar o que são machimbombos. "São chapas, era o nome que se lhes dava antigamente." Chapas são carrinhas que servem de autocarro, mas mais pequenas, normalmente atulhadas de gente. O meu pai lembra-se de outra. "Nunca percebi porque é que a dada altura se chamaram semicolectivos. O que é isso de semicolectivo? Ou é colectivo ou não é!" As suas indignações são sempre temperadas pela musicalidade que a língua adquiriu neste país. O espanto acrescenta umas notas que nós em Portugal não usamos. Mas o dono da casa não concluiu a aula. "Agora, machimbombos vem de machimba!..." O meu pai lança as mãos à cabeça. Eles adoram-se, são muitos amigos. Como uma dupla de *vaudeville* bem ensaiada, cada um tem o seu papel. O do meu pai é sério, mas isso não significa que não saiba onde a conversa terá de ir. Tem é de parecer que vai contrariado, faz parte do seu *show*.

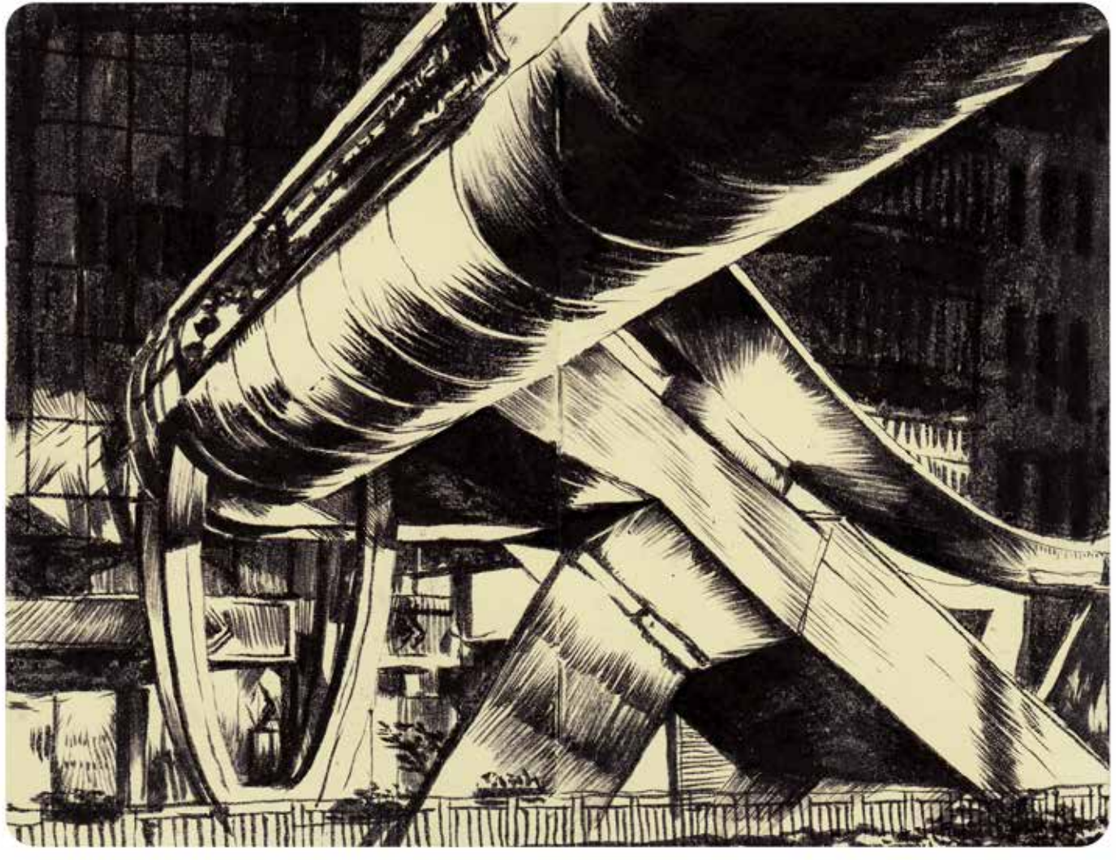
O significado de machimba subentende-se, principalmente porque não é logo verbalizado, por estarmos à mesa. Mas o brasileiro não percebeu e a angolana lá lhe atira a solução, meio por baixo da mesa. "É cocó." O brasileiro está baralhado. "Como, cocó? É galinha?" A mesa explode, talheres e louças tilintam de riso. Sirvo-me de mais BSE e vou em seu auxílio. "Não, é cocó! Há o chichi e há o cocó. Como é no Brasil?" Os seus olhos abrem-se num misto de excitação e reconhecimento. Mas que espanto. "O que nós temos é cocô!!! Cocó é o que a galinha fala!" Digo-lhe que outro dia comi um belo frango de coco. Ele não cabe em si de contente. "Vivi anos em Portugal e só agora aprendi uma nova palavra. Cocó!" A noite está ganha. Torna-se evidente na sua alegria: sem cocó a vida seria uma merda.





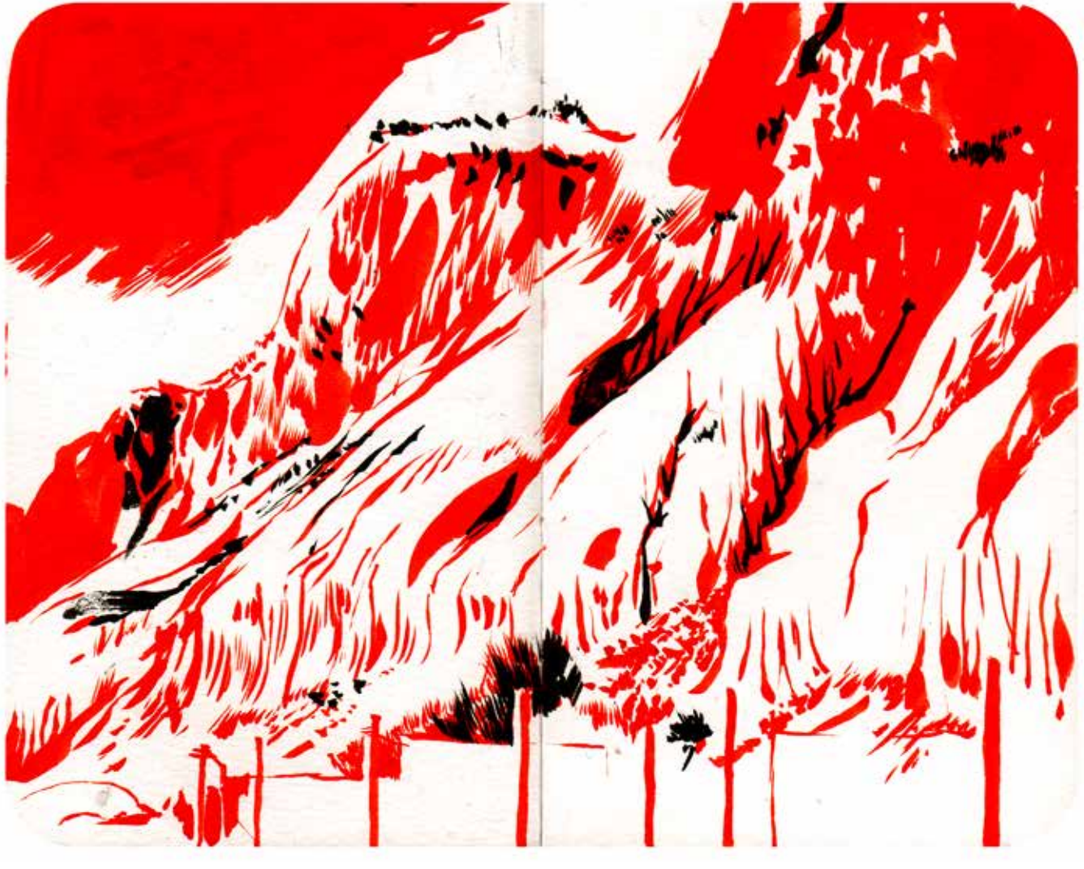




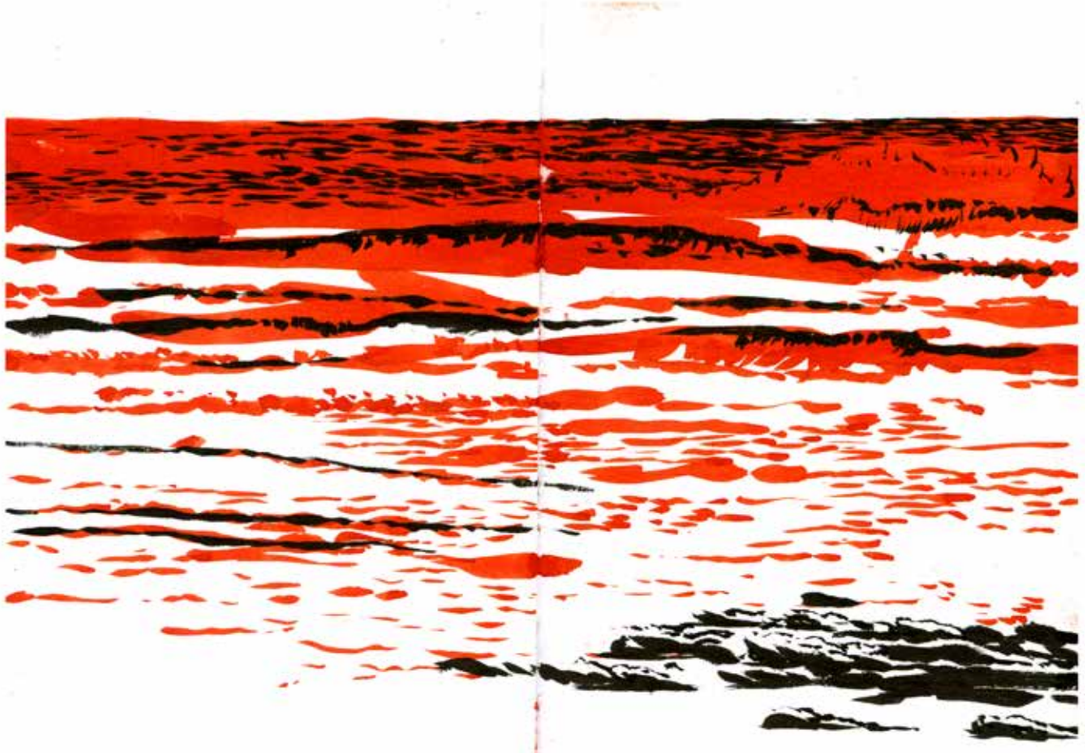


Ponte Governador Nobre de Carvalho, Macau, China 02 Mai 2012

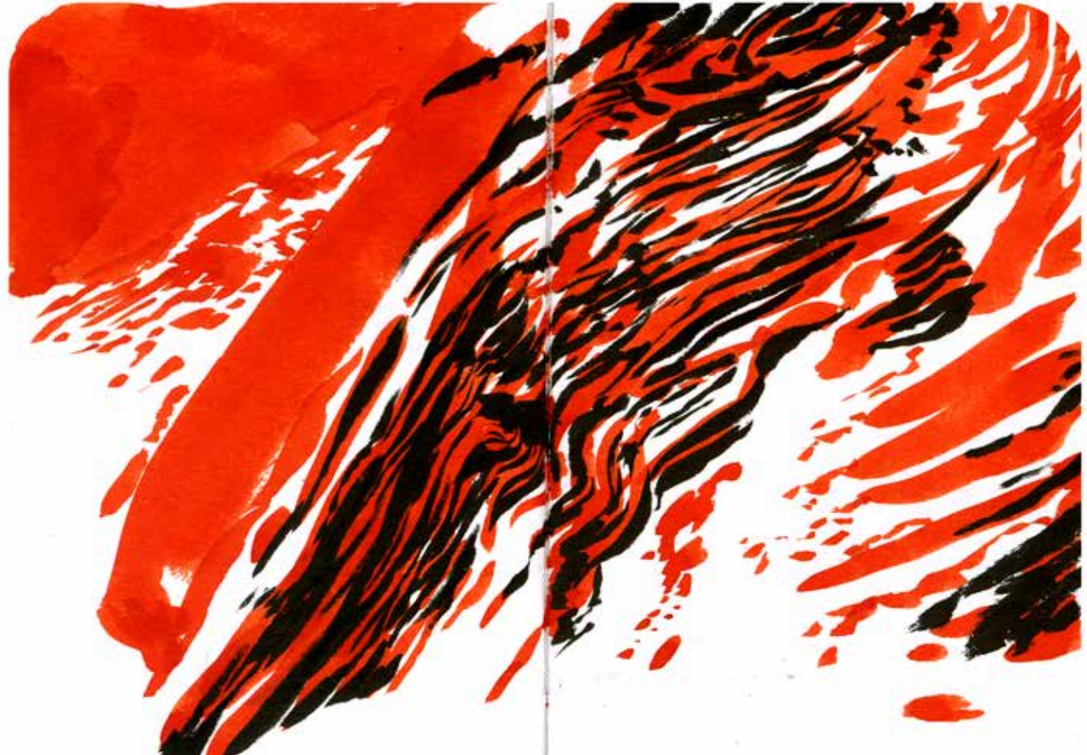
Praia da Falésia, Portugal 14 Mai 2012



Praia de Vale Figueiras, Alentejo, Portugal 16 Mai 2012



Praia de Vale Figueiras, Alentejo, Portugal 16 Mai 2012



Padrões de compressão, Praia de Vale Figueiras, Alentejo, Portugal 16 Mai 2012

Rua Coronel Mesquita, Macau, China 27 Jun 2012

No táxi, depois de lhe dizer a morada em cantonês, o taxista começa:

– *What's the block sir*?

Fico surpreendido por me falar em inglês, coisa rara neste canto do mundo. Hesito mas mantenho-me fiel à cartilha local.

– *Sap sam.*

O condutor então diz-me algo em cantonês, que obviamente não percebo. Ele está baralhado.

– *Oh, I thought you could speak cantonese!*

– *I'm sorry, I only know the numbers. And my address. And "momantai."*

Rimo-nos. Ele continua, animado.

– *You know? Cantonese is very difficult. It took me some time to learn. Mandarin is a little easier, but cantonese is hard.*

Intrigado, começo a pensar que este taxista é de Pequim, ou de uma zona mais a norte do país.

– *So you're not from Canton?*

– *I'm from Indonesia, had to learn this language. 30 years ago... Where are you from?*

– *Portugal.*

– Português? Eu falo português!

– *Really? So you know all the relevant languages here.*

Como se saber português servisse de alguma coisa nesta terra. Mas é fácil sentirmo-nos lisonjeados pelo interesse de outros povos no que é nosso. Continuo a espantar-me com os nomes das ruas em português, com os uniformes que ainda têm escrito "Polícia" em letras reflectoras. Comentava outro dia com alguém que me escapava a lógica desta aparente tolerância chinesa. De que lhes servia o português no território? Explicaram-me que talvez fosse uma maneira de tornar Macau distinto, pitoresco, diferente da China pura e dura. É no fundo uma maneira de ter algo de fora cá dentro, e foi sempre para isso que Macau serviu. É um Portugal dos pequeninos, idealizado muito antes da Veneza transplantada do Casino Venetian, que a tantos parece *kitsch*. Ocorre-me agora que a pulsão foi sempre a mesma. O Império do Meio contém curiosidade aos milhões.

Continuo a falar com o taxista em inglês porque o sotaque cerrado do seu português não me inspira muita confiança. É melhor jogar pelo seguro. Ele continua.

– Português é mais fácil, cantonês é muito difícil.

Desisto, passemos a português então.

– E indonésio, é fácil ou difícil?

– É como o português, é fácil.

– Ai é? Como assim?

– É fácil! Vocês dizem “sapato”, nós dizemos *“sepatu.”* “Manteiga” nós dizemos *“mentega.”* Por isso português é fácil para nós... Aqui estamos, *sap sam*, número treze...

Vou ter de investigar esta mais a fundo. Já ouvi dizer que o japonês contém várias palavras de origem portuguesa, mas não sabia que na Indonésia também havia sinais de contágio quinhentista. Andámos a semear mais latim do que pensava, com a ajuda de crucifixos e quinquilharias. E alguma pólvora para apimentar a coisa.

– E como se diz “obrigado”?

– *Terima kasih!*

– *Terima kasih.*

– *Thank you, sir!*

Insisti com a moça, mas nada feito. Dois voos separados com escala no Dubai, sete horas cada um, lugares à janela todos ocupados. Às vezes consigo um lugar ao pé da saída de emergência, mais espaçoso, mas nem isso. A senhora parecia genuinamente preocupada com o meu bem-estar, até um pouco de mais. Desculpava-se que o voo estava cheio, tentava, falava ao telefone com alguém que parecia ter poder para mexer as peças do tabuleiro com mais liberdade, com regras próprias. Mas não, nada feito. A Emirates abrira recentemente uma rota pelo Dubai, que passava a fazer de placa giratória mais em conta, para quem como eu gosta de fazer piscinas entre hemisférios. Os meridianos como barreiras de uma corrida de obstáculos. Talvez tenham sido demasiado ambiciosos, ou imprudentes. Numa era de *sites online,* com comparação de preços automática é de esperar que voos para o outro lado do mundo com preços abaixo do normal atraiam atenção instantânea. Resultado: toda a gente gosta de uma boa pechincha, de preferência à janela. "Acho que nem lhe consigo corredor." Essa do corredor... Nunca percebi porque gostam certas pessoas do corredor. A janela é que é, com a alucinação da paisagem que se inclina e muda de escala a bel-prazer do piloto, com a hipótese de nos encostarmos e dormirmos descansados. Um dia explicaram-me que quem gosta do corredor quer ir à casa de banho mais facilmente, coisa de mulheres. Nunca me tinha ocorrido. Foi como quando uma amiga me explicou que há mulheres que se sentam na praia à beirinha do mar porque se querem aliviar sem ninguém dar por isso. E eu que pensava que o sexo feminino era mais dado à contemplação bucólica...

Não faz mal, mentalizo-me de que terei de passar umas horas a tentar dormir sem tocar nos dois estranhos que me servirão de moldura. Fica o esforço da moça do *check-in*.

Dentro do avião, dirijo-me ao lugar atribuído, 10F. Mas algo não bate certo. Em vez da habitual cadeira entalada no meio de tantas outras, deparo-me com uma poltrona saída da sala de diagnóstico de um psicólogo futurista, com tanto espaço à volta que me imagino a fazer uma dança tribal em seu redor. Faço notar à hospedeira que não pedi e, principalmente, não paguei por aquilo, ao que ela me responde que o voo está demasiado cheio e que tiveram de distribuir os lugares de classe executiva a algumas pessoas da económica. Só lentamente me ocorre que a primeira moça, a do *check-in*, é que é responsável por esta providência. Traquinas, preparou-me uma surpresa nas minhas barbas. Gentileza e generosidade, pelos vistos ainda há disso.

A criança encurralada em mim senta-se e inspecciona o seu novo brinquedo. É um casulo de compartimentos, botões, opções. Quando era puto gostava dos Transformers, e esta cadeira pode ser uma cama. Estico os pés e não consigo tocar na poltrona em frente. Experimento todos os botões e o painel controlador *touchscreen* portátil do lado esquerdo, e coisas começam a mexer, uma divisória sobe, incontrolável, o ecrã gigante lá longe, nas costas da cadeira da frente, ilumina-se

e informa-me de que tenho montes de sorte, há uma data de coisas que posso ver, tocar, sentir, viver. Vai ser uma viagem cheia de emoção. Está ali escrito, deve ser verdade.

Sinto-me mal pela divisória que subiu entre mim e quem está ao meu lado esquerdo. Não quero que pensem que sou anti-social; é bom manter regras de boa vizinhança entre casulos. Digo casulo mas a palavra que salta mais facilmente é *pod*, que em inglês também significa vagem. É para isto que nos serve a tecnologia hoje em dia, para sermos mais fechados nos nossos confortos. E para nos ocorrerem nomes em inglês. Continuarmos entretidos, termos o nosso mundo confinado e uma data de ferramentas sociais para o partilharmos virtualmente. Mas continuamos iguais àqueles velhinhos que observam a rua à janela, todo o dia. As nossas janelas são mais sofisticadas, mas mais difíceis de fechar. Mantêm-nos dentro de casa. Esquecemo-nos de que do casulo e da vagem é suposto emergir algo de novo, um passo numa transição que permita outros voos. Veremos no que nos tornaremos daqui a uns anos, se em traças, em borboletas ou em *drones*.

Do outro lado da minha divisória rebelde, que se recusa a voltar à posição inicial, está uma freira. Lembro-me dela na fila do *check-in*. Parece noviça, vestida dos pés à cabeça de branco, jovem, mínima. Tem traços orientais, mas pele escura; talvez seja da Indonésia ou da Malásia. Está acompanhada por uma mulher mais velha, menos caracterizada com o hábito, cabeça descoberta, grisalha, portuguesa. Lembro-me de ter reparado em como são diferentes das freiras giraças das fantasias de Hollywood. Nos filmes, as mulheres do clero estão sempre a um passo de serem convertidas para o lado do pecado por um de nós, homens viris e irresistíveis. Mas estas parecem ter feito a sua escolha. Os braços são magros, rijos, de tarefas diárias, de trabalho. Os seus corpos tensos e secos tentam não ser femininos e quase o conseguem, envergonhados por detrás dos hábitos. Outros casulos. Estes sabem por que esperam.

Estranhas, as freiras. Nos EUA rebelaram-se contra a hierarquia papal. Atreveram-se a dizer que Cristo prega a tolerância e a compaixão, mesmo para com as minorias, para com os mais desafortunados e, sim, para com as mulheres. Ideias perigosas para o poder central masculino da Igreja Católica. Homens que não percebem que uma freira pode tentar deixar de ser mulher, mas mais dificilmente deixará de ser mãe.

Experimento todos os botões e consigo encontrar um equilíbrio de controlo do meu casulo / poltrona. *Podtrona*. É impossível estar mesmo confortável, com a antecipação da próxima necessidade e respectiva solução instantânea. Mas é muito melhor do que viajar em económica, claro. E as minhas vizinhas? O ecrã da noviça permanece desligado, tudo parece tranquilo, talvez durma. Espreito por cima da divisória e percebo. Está a ler um livro, tranquilamente. Naquele momento voa mais alto do que eu.

O AVIÃO COMEÇA A DESCER, COMO SE POUSASSE NUMA CAMA ESPECTRAL de arranha-céus. A estrutura urbana é subentendida pelas constelações de janelas iluminadas sobre elegantes silhuetas negras geométricas, contrastantes com as nuvens baixas, que reflectem as luzes nocturnas da metrópole. A noite em Hong Kong tem uma paisagem invertida, com o céu carregado, relevos de vapor solidificado pela luz indirecta da cidade, pairando por cima do cintilar de milhões de lares que ainda não se deitaram. E talvez nunca se deitem.

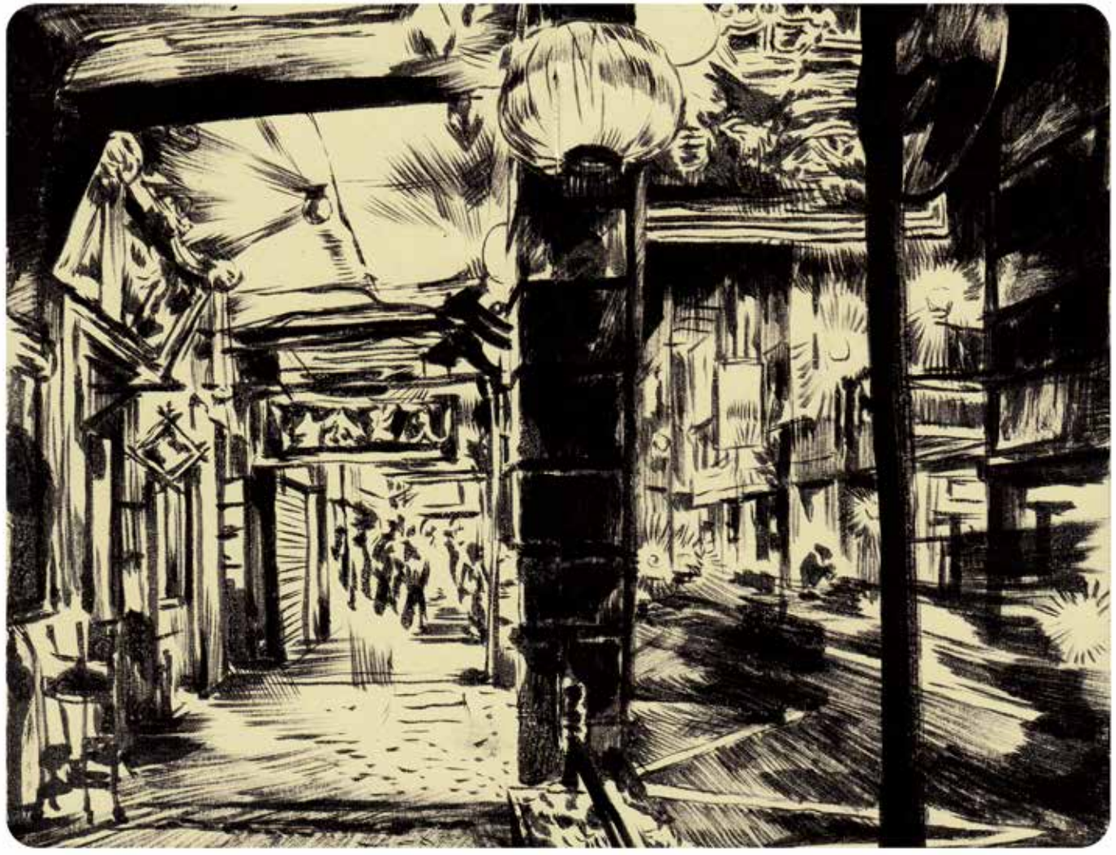
A minha primeira viagem de avião acaba aqui, a oito mil quilómetros de casa, a 22 horas da partida. Com 16 anos. Ao sair para o ar da noite levo com o jacto quente do motor do avião. Ou assim penso, até verificar que o reactor está debaixo da asa, lá para trás. O que sinto é a atmosfera do Sul da China, húmida, persistente e gelatinosa. O ar, impossivelmente quente, condensa-se na pele em gotas de suor viscoso. A roupa ganha um novo atrito contra o corpo, colando-se a ele. Até os pensamentos ficam abafados, juntamente com os sons envolventes, absorvidos pelo ar, aquáticos.

Talvez seja por isso que Hong Kong e Macau existem mais de noite, dentro de mim. Cheguei aqui pela primeira vez há 20 anos.

A face de Macau é múltipla, enrugada, e ganha dramatismo quando iluminada por candeeiros de rua. Torna-se projectada, fantasmagórica, gráfica.

Andando pelas ruas, à noite, encontra-se em cada esquina um pormenor que ficaria bem no papel. Os fios de telecomunicações e de electricidade são traços que unem as fachadas, que as vandalizam. Em vez de grafitis, as pessoas exprimem-se com intervenções utilitárias clandestinas, que a tudo se sobrepõem. O impossível bulício do dia é, à noite, subentendido pelos seus vestígios. Tanto o asfalto como as fachadas dos prédios exibem marcas das derrapagens do dia anterior.

É a única cidade que conheço onde não se sente medo na rua, fora de horas. Parece que a qualidade envolvente do ar, húmido e quente, transmite uma segurança acrescida. Um retorno a um ambiente amniótico, de liberdade contemplativa.



O RESTAURANTE É PEQUENO, MAS TEM UM PRIMEIRO ANDAR ONDE quase sempre há lugar. Procuro sossego e sento-me lá em cima, onde apenas outra mesa está ocupada. Instalo-me perto do grupo de cinco adolescentes chineses que comem em silêncio. Têm uniformes da mesma escola, mas usam-nos com pequenas variações de personalidade que os tornam distintos, humanos. Os que mantêm o casaco nas costas revelam o nome da escola, Brito.

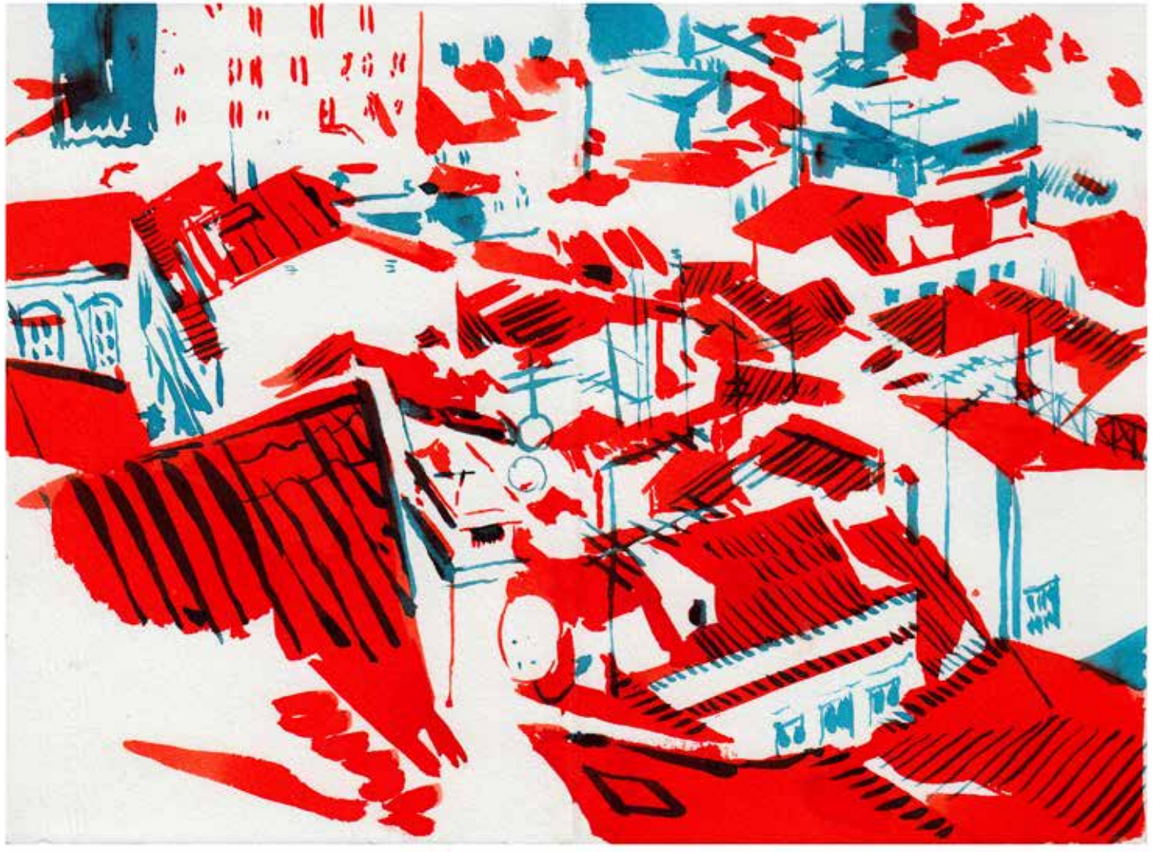
Gosto de comer a ler, e por estes dias o mais prático é ler no telefone, desafiando todas as supostas regras de leitura saudável. Dá mais jeito do que um livro, não se tem de manter as páginas abertas, não se tem de transportar na mão antes e depois da refeição. Após alguns minutos a tentar arranjar uma hierarquia para o manuseamento do telefone e o dos talheres, reparo no silêncio. Ninguém fala na mesa ao lado. Três estão a olhar para o telefone, um come massa sofregamente e tem a boca cheia, outro, enorme, parece de poucas falas e olha à volta com ar de porteiro de discoteca. Um deles distrai-se do telefone e olha na minha direcção, intrigado. O que come esparguete levanta os olhos do prato de vez em quando para tentar ver o que o seu amigo tanto observa no telefone, concentrado. Mas ninguém fala. Não há um som.

Dizem que vivemos na era da informação, e estamos constantemente cercados por ferramentas de comunicação. Sabemos o que se passa com cada um dos nossos amigos ou ídolos, ou pelo menos temos essa ilusão. Porque o que nos é fornecido é o guião idealizado que cada um escreve

para a sua própria vida, em tempo real, nas redes sociais. Viver tornou-se um acto estético. Noutros tempos houve quem até gastasse dinheiro a comprar livros que mostrassem um determinado estatuto social. Nem era preciso lê-los. Hoje em dia há uma desmaterialização da ostentação, no sentido em que já não contam os livros que mostramos na estante, mas sim os que dizemos que lemos e o que citamos. As viagens que fazemos, a comida que comemos, as opiniões que temos, os textos que escrevemos. Tudo comprovado com milhares de fotografias tiradas naquele segundo de sublimação e transcendência, adequadamente vivido e filtrado por um ecrã de telemóvel que colocamos apressadamente à frente de tudo o que seja susceptível de querermos que seja lembrado. Amamos, viajamos, comemos e dançamos para uma audiência, a maior parte das vezes imaginária, porque nem todos somos estrelas de Hollywood nem temos quem se interesse pelo que fazemos. Não posso deixar de pensar que, sendo a espécie humana, por natureza, social, não quer dizer que o seja mais naturalmente em rede. Porque a interacção passa a ser interna e constantemente múltipla, sem correspondente física. É abstracta, um comportamento embrionário da telepatia. Já sabemos tudo o que queremos saber antes de estarmos frente a frente com quem está do outro lado da linha. E temos sede de mais, de procurar mais já, neste instante. Na alvorada da revolução digital houve quem dissesse que a leitura estaria em perigo. Mas hoje parece ser a fala que se torna obsoleta, enquanto lemos o que os outros escrevem, pensam, querem, fazem, desdenham.

Levantei os olhos do telefone e apanhei o jovem chinês ainda a olhar para mim, como se eu fosse o foco de maior interesse naquele instante. Todos os outros na mesa estavam no seu mundo particular, surfando como eu um mundo infinito de realidades na ponta dos dedos.

Olhámo-nos nos olhos e percebi que nenhum de nós estava ali.



Olho para a asa a oscilar, dançando ao ritmo da turbulência que sacode o avião ao começar a descida para Istambul e, como de costume, lembro-me de que estatisticamente as alturas de maior risco num voo são a descolagem e a aterragem. Em Lisboa terei de ir directamente ao velório de um amigo da família, da geração da minha mãe. Se lá chegar. Paranóico, penso sempre que o avião vai cair, que uma vida pode mudar ou acabar num piscar de olhos inesperado. Mas obrigo-me a cirandar pelo mundo, apesar do medo. No final de contas ou se vive ou não, e não convém deixar as coisas a meio.

Nós, os ateus, temos uma relação estranha com a morte. Não há nada por que ansiar nem por que temer. Simplesmente deixa-se de existir, o que equivale a um não sentimento, bom ou mau. É como sentir o antes de nascer. Ou a ausência de quem nunca chegámos a conhecer. Mas o medo continua lá, a definir mais ou menos a nossa vida. Percebo que se seja religioso e não acredito que a religião seja alguma vez completamente substituída por uma visão mais iluminada do mundo, baseada em coisas que se possam testar, conhecer. Vamos ter sempre necessidade de explicar o medo da morte, simplesmente porque existe, imune a racionalizacões hábeis para a sua falta de lógica. E por mais que biologia, sociologia, psicologia e genética nos expliquem o porquê do instinto de sobrevivência, da protecção da prole e dos demais comportamentos inatos, o facto é que a angústia está lá, embebida em nós. A pedir uma razão mais simples e imediatamente tangível.

Tento racionalizar o que sinto ao ver a asa a lutar pela sustentação da enorme máquina que me tenta magicamente pousar em segurança no solo, no alcatrão escondido lá em baixo, no fundo do nevoeiro. Talvez a causa do medo seja não saber, nunca poder prever se e quando algo vai correr mal. No outro dia tive de desenhar a caricatura de um homem que descobriu que tinha um cancro terminal e que iria durar mais uns meses. Angustiado toda a vida com a sua própria existência, agora estava calmo e feliz. A espera estava a chegar ao fim, podia relaxar.

Acho que sim, talvez seja essa a origem do medo. É também por isso que não gosto de filmes de terror. Ao lidar com a morte, é o *suspense* que me mata.

Largo do Limoeiro, Lisboa, Portugal 13 Fev 2013

Jardim Augusto Gil, Graça, Lisboa, Portugal 14 Fev 2013

Campo de Santa Clara, Lisboa, Portugal 17 Fev 2013

Telhados de Alfama, Lisboa, Portugal 17 Fev 2013

Marina do Parque das Naçõe, Lisboa, Portugal 19 Fev 2013

Vista de Nossa Senhora do Monte, Lisboa, Portugal 27 Fev 2013

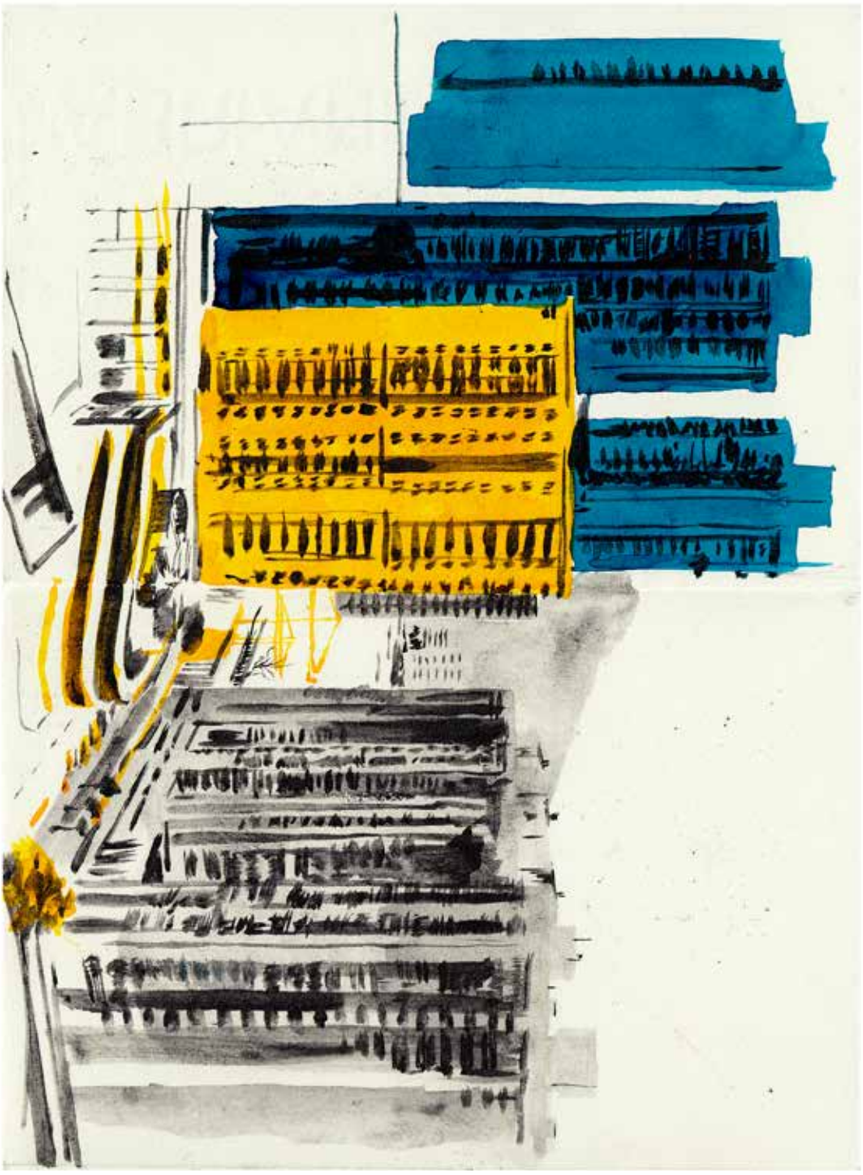
Acordo de manhã, subo o estore do quarto e a vista é a do cos-tume, o parque de entrada do prédio com os caixotes do lixo a demarcarem o passeio. Está um casal de meia-idade a rebuscar um dos caixotes. Não é a primeira vez que os vejo, a cena é-me familiar. Mesmo ao lado, como de costume, está uma carrinha parada, de portas abertas, o que revela a sua pertença ao casal. A sua aparente cumplicidade, muda, calma e metódica, empresta dignidade ao que fazem, mesmo que salpicada pelo lixo dos outros. Dentro da carrinha entrevêem-se os despojos de incontáveis buscas pela quinquilharia descartável de Lisboa. Suponho que seja uma rotina diária deste casal, um ritual de subsistência. Pergunto-me o que encontrarão todos os dias que justifique que continuem. O orgulho e noções enraizadas de classe não nos permitem sequer apontar a nossa curiosidade a um caixote de lixo, estamos mais habituados a recolher conchas e seixos polidos na praia, ou ossos descarnados no campo. Temos o preconceito instintivo de que a natureza é limpa, e de que nós não fazemos parte dela, para o bem e para o mal. Na verdade, acredito que se encontre muita coisa útil no lixo urbano, quem sabe o suficiente para se suprimir a maior parte dos desejos materiais. Basta desviar o olhar da janela para dentro de casa, e verificar que metade dos nossos pertences poderiam bem estar dentro de um daqueles contentores. Mas por enquanto está tudo aqui em casa, protegido por abstractos laços sentimentais e de preguiça.

Quase simultaneamente, entra em cena no mesmo passeio um amolador, com a sua flauta de Pã a atrair fregueses. Passa em frente do casal atarefado em roda dos caixotes, sem reparar neles, com os olhos postos nas janelas elevadas dos prédios residenciais, sempre a assobiar com a flauta. O som que produz atrai olhares e memórias de infância, e fala de um tempo em que a nossa vida ainda não era feita inteiramente de descartáveis. Espera que antes de deitarmos fora as nossas facas e tesouras o chamemos para insuflar vida ao que já mal nos serve.

Basta subir um estore e, de janela aberta, pode escolher-se entre passado, presente e futuro. Deitar fora, resistir ou tentar salvar o que nos resta.

Rua da Praia Grande, Macau, China 05 Abr 2013

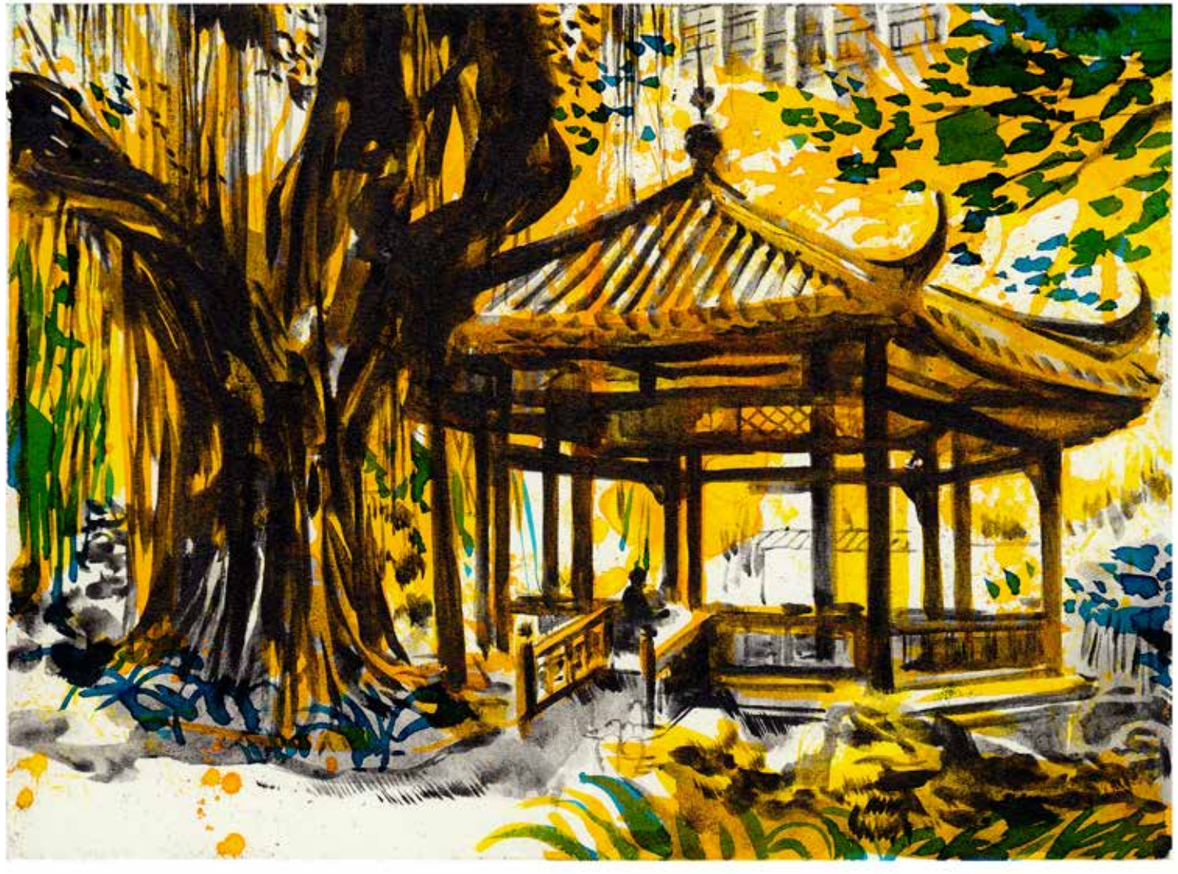
Vista do Forte de Mong-Há, Macau 07 Abr 2013



Fai-Chi-Kei, vista do Forte de Mong-Há, Macau, China 07 Abr 2013

Telhados vistos do parque de Mong-Há, Macau, China

Rua Coronel Mesquita, Macau, China



Os últimos três dias foram uma névoa. Viajo sem tirar férias e trabalho em andamento. Em Macau desenho a Thatcher, para Londres, enquanto critico o governo português num *cartoon* para o *Diário de Notícias* de Lisboa. Dormito, sonho com família e amigos do outro lado do mundo, tenho pesadelos, acordo e obrigo-me a aceitar fazer uma ilustração evocativa da obra-prima norte-americana *Moby Dick* para a *Vanity Fair*. Estou no limite das forças. O trabalho sempre viajou à minha frente para alguns cantos do mundo e desloca-se mais ligeiro. E desde o ano passado decidi viajar também, constantemente, mas a contra-ciclo dos desenhos, numa pendularidade simétrica. Calhou assim, ainda nem sei bem porquê. Se faço um desenho para os EUA devo estar em Macau, se penso num desenho para Londres talvez esteja em Moçambique, quando recebo *emails* de Zurique apetece-me Xangai. Sem dúvida é sinal de que os sítios por onde gosto de me mover não têm o mercado que procura o meu trabalho. Também não é incomum pai e filhos terem gostos diferentes. Fujo do Inverno e os desenhos procuram a beira das lareiras.

Sem pensar nem dormir o suficiente, é mais um barco, um aeroporto, um avião, escalas atrás de escalas, numa sucessão interminável de refeições ligeiras em que uma das hipóteses é sempre *chicken*, depois do *check-in* antes dos raios X, metais no tabuleiro, *do you have liquids*, *boarding*

pass please, *would you like something to drink*, *fasten seat belt*, *prepare for landing*, balcão de *transfer*, passadeiras, passadeiras. Sei que transito por estes sítios porque vejo o meu reflexo a ser arrastado, imóvel, por uma eterna parede de vidraças que se sobrepõem a uma infinidade de aviões de cores diversas e com potenciais destinos. O meu foi escolhido sem pensar muito nisso, sem pesquisas nem preparações. Foram dados lançados há uma semana e já me esqueci do porquê, já não importa. Finalmente espero com olhar vago, ao lado de um tapete de borracha, que subitamente se começa a mover, pego na última réstia de familiaridade que me acompanha na forma de uma mala e saio para a rua depois do derradeiro carimbo, pisco os olhos e…

O homem à frente de uma legião de muitos mais, todos vestidos do mesmo caqui, pergunta-me se quero um táxi, e eu aceito, dizendo o destino final que ainda consegui decorar: Afonso Guest House, Panjim, Goa.

A estrada serpenteia por uma costa forrada a vegetação alta, tropical. Coqueiros, palmeiras a perder de vista e por vezes, meio escondidas pela folhagem omnipresente, construções quase familiares; já vi aquilo em qualquer lado. São igrejas, transplantadas de uma qualquer aldeia alentejana ou beiroa. O cenário é pacífico, o mar calmo, está calor. Fecho os olhos e penso numa cama, uma qualquer, não importa onde.

São sete e meia da manhã, e na Afonso Guest House sou recebido por uma senhora que deve ser a matriarca do clã, do negócio familiar. De uma simpatia extrema, pergunta-me, num português perfeito, se sou o André. Olho à volta, tentando absorver o famoso bairro das Fontainhas, onde dizem que Portugal ainda se esconde e sobrevive às vassouradas da história e do orgulho nacional indiano. “Parece Portugal, não é?” pergunta ela, deixando-me curioso. Pergunto-lhe “Já esteve em Portugal?” “Não”, diz ela sorrindo, “mas é o que costumam dizer.” Estou inclinado a concordar, é parecido com alguma coisa que já vi em Portugal, ou não, com alguma coisa que já vi num postal de Portugal à venda na Rua Augusta ou, espera, nem é bem isso, é muito parecido com todos os lugares espalhados pelo mundo que dizem ser parecidos com Portugal. Com o original, nem tanto. É parecido com algumas ruas de Maputo e de Pemba, com bairros históricos do Rio de Janeiro, com becos em Macau cujas varandas coloniais são sustentadas por vigas de ferro que as salvam da degradação. É uma arquitectura portuguesa que tenta lidar com o calor, que deixa circular o ar. Mas também lembra algumas casas senhoriais lá na terra do meu avô na Beira Alta, que a minha mãe explicava serem construídas por gente que voltava do Brasil, cheia de dinheiro e de tendências arquitectónicas coloniais. É um Portugal que não se apercebe de que já não é o mesmo e não pode existir fora daqui, ainda com o tal ADN que reconhecemos, mas que cresceu com raízes implantadas neste lugar, com os nutrientes deste solo. É nosso, mas nem tanto.

O quarto, esse, é meu por agora. E a cama serve perfeitamente.

Ao acordar depois de muito tempo sem dormir, há sempre uns breves instantes em que se processa o ambiente, e em alguns casos se pára para pensar o que raio se passou. Basta abrir a janela, passar alguma água pela cara, um breve passeio na rua e confirma-se a conclusão a que tinha chegado relutantemente, ao abrir os olhos após quatro horas de sono. Estou na Índia. Numa Índia, para ser mais preciso. Sento-me na esplanada recomendada pelo guia e pelo homem da *guest house*, e peço uma cerveja. Tinha saudades deste calor que nos obriga a beber cerveja estupidamente gelada, que nos relaxa os músculos e faz baixar os ombros, esticar o pescoço e atirar a cabeça para trás, de olhos fechados. *"Hello, how are you?"* pergunta a senhora. Está à beira do alpendre onde estou sentado e percebe-se que é a dona do estabelecimento. Mete conversa, quer saber de mim, de onde venho. Ela anima-se. *"Oh Portugal, I've been to Portugal! Fifteen days, I went to Fatima!"* Lembro-me de que no pedido de visto para a Índia perguntavam a religião, um acto de prudência estatística que dá pistas para tudo o que de mau pode acontecer em nome do deus ou deuses de cada um. Eu sou cada vez mais ateu militante, mas que acredita na tolerância entre credos. Sabendo perfeitamente que um credo tem sempre uma base de intolerância aos

outros credos. No entanto quanto mais passo fronteiras e verifico que as coisas que nos unem são tantas mais do que as que nos separam mais começo a ficar impaciente com bairrismos, clubismos e nacionalismos, regionalismos e ismos que mais se assemelham a istmos, estrangulamentos cada vez mais apertados que dificultam a passagem livre de um aperto de mão a um abraço, normalmente entre pessoas tão semelhantes nas suas diferenças. Mas não tenho coragem de o dizer a esta senhora tão sinceramente amável. Ela continua: *"In Fatima there was this olive tree. An olive tree! And all the olives, many many, were laying on the ground. Such a waste..."* Percebo o que ela quer dizer e começo a sorrir, digo-lhe o meu nome e pergunto-lhe o dela. *"Linda, my name is Linda."* O empregado do restaurante de serviço à esplanada, que ouvia a conversa ao lado da senhora, de cara fechada e impávido, mais novo, quase mal encarado, reage como autómato e aponta para cima da minha cabeça, autoritário. Olho para cima e vejo um letreiro que parece o nome da rua, embebido na fachada, mas em que está escrito *Linda's Viva Panjim Restaurant*. Percebi, OK, chama-se Linda. O empregado volta a olhar o vazio, calado, ao lado da dona. Dona do restaurante ou dele, não se percebe bem. Voltando ao fio da meada, volto também a sorrir. De todo o fausto e ritual que Fátima envolve, e sem ser em detrimento da fé genuína que esta senhora deve sentir, o que a chocou e marcou mais foi o desperdício das azeitonas da oliveirinha sagrada. Explico-lhe que foi por cima da oliveira que os três pastorinhos viram a Virgem Maria,

semente para todo o estendal moderno à volta, capelas, autocarros, promessas, altares e velas. Órgãos amputados feitos de cera, de esperanças. A minha tendência para a analogia visual cómica prepara-se para dizer que as azeitonas no chão são meras caganitas do cordeiro de deus, e portanto igualmente sagradas, mas seria demais. Ela conta que está habituada a viver com o que tem, sem desperdício, sem estadão, simples. No interior do restaurante está uma secretária a par com as mesas de comida, e é onde ela trabalha e recebe, no meio dos clientes que comem. Fala-me das filhas, espalhadas pelo mundo, e eu penso em desenhos ao sabor do vento e das lareiras anglo-saxónicas. Quantas pessoas que já passaram fome ficarão com a imagem das azeitonas no chão de Fátima? Digo-lhe que aqui, no seu país, também há devoção, monumentos, presenças imponentes da história. Um mosaico mais rico e intrincado de crenças milenares. *"Yes, but Fatima is Fatima"* conclui ela pacientemente.

Toca um sino; surpreende-me. Mais uma vez sou teleportado para a Beira Alta, acordado pelo badalar da igreja de Escalhão, a aldeia do meu avô. Mas é a capela de São Sebastião, mesmo ali ao lado. *"Do you hear this bell?"* salta ela atenta, a olhar um ponto indistinto no céu, de dedo de professora primária em riste. *"It means someone died."* Fico confuso; como é que ela sabe que não é outra coisa qualquer? *"It's this kind of ding, ding-dong... ding, ding-dong."* O ritmo do sino

chama o luto ao bairro. Ela desculpa-se com um sorriso e vai para dentro. Quer ligar a alguém para saber quem partiu. Já não tem mais tempo para quem acabou de chegar.

Do outro lado do estreito beco onde se encontra o alpendre onde estou sentado vejo recortes de jornais pendurados, elogios ao restaurante Viva Panjim. E a foto dela, mais nova, com o nome completo. Linda de Souza, pois claro. Afinal Portugal está aqui tão perto.

Valvoline

Cada partida é um reencontro, cada regresso uma fuga. Ou talvez desistência. Saio à procura de não precisar de mais nada do que o que consigo transportar comigo, cortando o cordão umbilical que nos une a tudo o que se acumula à nossa volta. Objectos, posses, obrigações, afectos. Em casa fico mais lento, mais ancorado e inerte. E sinto-me submerso. Pergunto-me o que são todas estas coisas que enchem as estantes e os armários à minha volta. Daqui a cem anos ninguém se importará com o livro que guardei teimosamente e no qual nunca voltei a pegar. Fora de casa ganho claridade e leveza, uma forma mais despojada.

Mas ando pelo mundo e já não quero ser turista. Não quero a pressão de ter de ver os sítios, os monumentos, as coisas fantásticas. Quero estar em lugares como se sempre lá tivesse estado, de tempos a tempos reparando em algo que mereça atenção, naturalmente. Criando hábitos de familiaridade sempre que possa, passando mais tempo no café da esquina. Ou dentro de portas a ler com a janela aberta, deixando as palavras serem contaminadas pelos sons de ruas que me são estranhas. Por vezes o sítio onde quero fazer maior esforço de fruição e de conhecimento é Lisboa. Porque me irrita toda a gente que anda pelo mundo fora a tirar as mesmas fotos que os outros, nos mesmos sítios para onde são atirados por catapultas movidas a jacto, exibindo no regresso a sua imensa tolerância para com todos os costumes pitorescos e típicos e tão engraçados, antes de dizerem mal da cor da saia da colega do trabalho. Do capachinho do chefe.

É ao virar da esquina da minha casa que quero descobrir um recanto onde nunca fui, parar à sombra da árvore que sempre contornei. Perguntar pelas histórias que devia saber. Quero apanhar um autocarro de turista no Terreiro do Paço e sobrevoar a Baixa de helicóptero. Quero tratar Lisboa bem, falar melhor com ela, olhá-la com olhos de ver. Pensando melhor sou eu o culpado do desgaste na nossa convivência. Porque uma relação longa exige trabalho e dedicação, entrega consciente. E dura uma vida. Gasto-me em lugares que nunca perderam tempo comigo, e viro as costas à cidade que me fez.

Cada partida é descarnar e ficar com um tutano que não queremos deixar para trás, mas que pode ser-nos redutor. Em casa, como noutro sítio qualquer, temos de nos esforçar por não virar as costas a nós mesmos. Na nossa cidade é mais difícil, porque ela é espelho de quem dela depende e de quem com ela sofre, e muitas vezes não gostamos do que vemos. Conhece-nos demasiado bem. Em todos os regressos encontramos à nossa espera a identidade que costumamos vestir em casa, amarfanhada no sítio onde a deixáramos à pressa, pronta a ser sacudida e usada outra vez. Resta saber se a nudez valeu a pena.

Procuramos um sentido para a vida debaixo de pedras feitas de crenças calcificadas pelo tempo. Pergunto-me se alguém encontra verdadeiramente alguma coisa, por detrás de tanta cara iluminada de certezas. Eu não, e estou tramado. Mas ultimamente foi-me dada uma pista. Parece-me que o tal sentido tem de ser profundamente individual, partindo do princípio de que cada um é autor de uma parte do seu percurso e sabe de onde vem, intui para onde quer ir. Ou para onde não quer. Desconfio de respostas demasiado fáceis e abrangentes, formulaicas e movediças, sem conteúdo. Adaptáveis a toda a gente.

Parece-me que o maior sinal de que a busca acabou é quando se deixa de ter necessidade de a fazer. Descobri que deixo de pensar em procurar quando desenho à vista, quando registo o que me rodeia. Desenhar tem o poder de abrandar tudo, de me tornar mais imerso num canto particular da realidade. Não penso em mais nada a não ser no que estou a ver. Aliás não penso, olho. E é o desenho que encontra por mim.

Talvez seja o mais próximo de um propósito que alguma vez encontrarei. Até agora pensei sempre no problema ao contrário. Não tenho de saber o que procurar, tenho de perceber quando não procuro e acarinhar esses momentos. E isso acontece sempre que me sento e calmamente inspiro o que me rodeia, exalando um desenho. No fundo talvez não seja assim tão mau, posso antever o meu papel na ordem cósmica das coisas. Sou uma mera testemunha.

Devo estar a ter uma reacção a tudo o que nos bombardeia diariamente nos *media*, na Internet, nas redes sociais e afins. Constelações de informação pulverizada, que nos estimulam constantemente e nos dão a ilusão de sabermos muito acerca de tudo. Na verdade não sabemos nada em profundidade, sabemos um pouco de muitas coisas. Arranhamos a superfície de incontáveis assuntos, confiantes em que, mesmo que não estejamos correctos, podemos consultar o telemóvel e ajustar a nossa percepção. Relegámos a nossa memória para os *gadgets*, e utilizamo-los como discos externos de *backup* das nossas vivências, eventos, opiniões, afectos. O nosso cérebro torna-se a memória RAM, *ready available memory*, com meras capacidades de processamento em tempo real do que vai acontecendo, mas sem fixar nada. Descartável. O que está registado é o que conta. Mas fica a pergunta: se o que define a nossa conduta e a nossa resposta emocional ao que vivemos é a memória de eventos passados, como será que olhamos o mundo quando essa memória está deslocalizada, fora de nós? Lembro-me de que um dia, puto, vi a minha mãe chorar em frente da televisão. Não percebi porquê, fiquei assustado e intrigado. Mostravam imagens de uma praça e de uns tanques, e de um pequeno homem a enfrentá-los. Diziam que era na China. Adolescente, ainda não possuía a bagagem emocional que me permitisse projectar-me na luta de outros por liberdade. Um velho comove-se mais do que uma criança, porque a empatia se baseia no conhecimento acumulado de experiências pessoais, e no reconhecimento das mesmas dores nos outros. Comoção é recordar. Uma criança chora de dor ou de medo. É o limite do seu saber.

Se o acesso à informação se tornou quase ubíquo e se a própria produção de informação nos envolve a todos, diariamente, constantemente, temos de arranjar capacidade para a armazenar num sítio com muito mais espaço, fora das nossas limitadas cabeças. Mas isso implica arriscarmo-nos a perder a catalogação emocional que damos às nossas experiências, o mapa pelo qual navegamos ética e moralmente pelo mundo e que nos indica as fronteiras na nossa identidade. Como podemos relacionar-nos com o nosso presente e com o nosso futuro se a nossa memória foi alvo de *outsourcing* para dentro das nossas câmaras, computadores, telefones, *tablets*? Porque a partir de certa altura já não utilizamos as memórias externas só para o excesso de registos, utilizamo-las para tudo. E simplesmente gravamos, fotografamos, filmamos cada vez mais, sem parar e em trânsito, e demitimo-nos de o que fazer com os resultados.

Daí a minha reacção enviesada. Quando viajo insisto em me confinar a recantos cada vez mais pequenos no novo e vasto sítio que devia descobrir. No limite posso passar dias na mesma esplanada, no mesmo beco, imune a tentações externas. É que quero conhecer pelo menos aquele

cantinho, obrigar a mente a assimilar, a não delegar na foto instantânea. Talvez assim o consiga levar sempre comigo, sem ajuda.

Praia de Agonda, Goa, Índia 24 Abr 2013

Dirigíamo-nos em velocidade para a praia de Palolem numa sim- ples acelera. A estrada sinuosa estava em completa escuridão, unicamente iluminada pelo ocasional veículo que nos encadeava, vindo em direcção contrária. Sem capacete, em calções e chinelos, qualquer erro de condução seria desastroso, a centenas de quilómetros de qualquer possível assistência. Tenho medo de motas, mas em Goa não há hipótese. É nestas alturas, e só nestas alturas, que tenho de acreditar na providência. Nada como um pequeno cagaço para nos dar alguma fé.

Há apenas umas escassas horas o condutor era-me completamente desconhecido. De alguma forma estes últimos dias têm sido uma revelação silenciosa. A praia de Agonda foi-me recomendada por alguns goeses solícitos, em duas ocasiões distintas, e confiei no que o acaso me punha à frente. Com alguma pesquisa *online* acabei por vir parar a uma cabana virada directamente para a praia. A ausência de turistas sublinha o final de época. No restaurante, também empoleirado na praia, tenho estado quase sempre sozinho ou acompanhado por um ou dois casais isolados. Criei o costume de combinar banho de mar com banho de sol e com trabalho, pois este nunca me deixa completamente em paz. Mas a indispensável ligação *wi-fi* é caprichosa. E mudam a *password* frequentemente.

Passar muito tempo sozinho pode ser perigoso. Há vozes internas que se tornam mais audazes, e nos afunilam em construções mentais que não nos deixam pausar. Para essas não é necessário *login* e não há interruptor *offline*. Tento aceitar viver coisas sem as partilhar com ninguém, tento não me importar de sentir saudades, de procurar no horizonte algo que sei não estar lá. Mergulho no mar batido e ao voltar à superfície olho à volta, somente para verificar que estou sozinho em três quilómetros de praia. O primeiro instinto é perguntar o porquê de estar ali. E saber que o truque é não fazer perguntas.

O mar torna-se presença autoritária, pelo martelar implacável das ondas. À noite continua lá, inamovível mas em constante fricção espraiada, uma parede de som interminável, que define os limites do meu quarto, e presentemente do meu mundo. É o mar que me vai desbastando a pouco e pouco, sacudindo futilidades e ponderações elípticas. Com o passar dos dias começa-se simplesmente a estar, sem muitas preocupações com o que se deve ser.

"Are you single? Also, are you gay?" As duas perguntas que me deixam num estado de divertimento eufórico, com riso incontrolável de surpresa, são proferidas pelo meu anfitrião. Não tinha reparado nele, mas ao verificar que no restaurante a rede não estava a funcionar e pedia uma nova *password*, levantei-me com o computador e dirigi-me à recepção. *"I can give*

you the password, come here." De uma mesa ao lado um homem indiano, que aparentava a minha idade, chamava-me. Ainda não o tinha visto aqui, e parecia estar de passagem, com *laptop* e alguns livros em cima da mesa. Disse-me que era um dos sócios do pequeno complexo de *bungalows*, um advogado de Mumbai que tinha decidido investir na costa de Goa. Contei-lhe que estava aqui porque sim. Dispôs-se rapidamente a mostrar-me alguns sítios que não eram imediatamente visíveis nos guias turísticos, mas de repente parou, sorriu com um olhar de esguelha e disparou: *"Wait a minute, are you single? Are you gay?"*

Gosto sempre de falar com pessoas que verbalizam aquilo que não tenho coragem de dizer. E talvez este esclarecimento fosse necessário para passarmos a uma outra fase de interacção, mais de acordo com os interesses de cada um. Quanto ao tom levemente homofóbico, por agora passa, varrido temporariamente para debaixo do tapete da tolerância cultural. Sim, não. Risota e adiante. *"To tell you the truth I only asked because I knew the answer already."* Vivaço, o rapaz.

Tem uma figura curiosa. Baixo e muito moreno, apesar de se classificar de pele clara, parece uma versão indiana do Al Pacino, em novo, sempre com um sorriso trocista nos lábios. Diz que me quer mostrar a praia de Palolem, os bares estão lá, cheios de loucura e diversão, a um tirinho de estrada. Ao fim do dia vai-me procurar. Lá se vai a introspecção zen aquática. O Al Pacino fez-me uma oferta irrecusável.

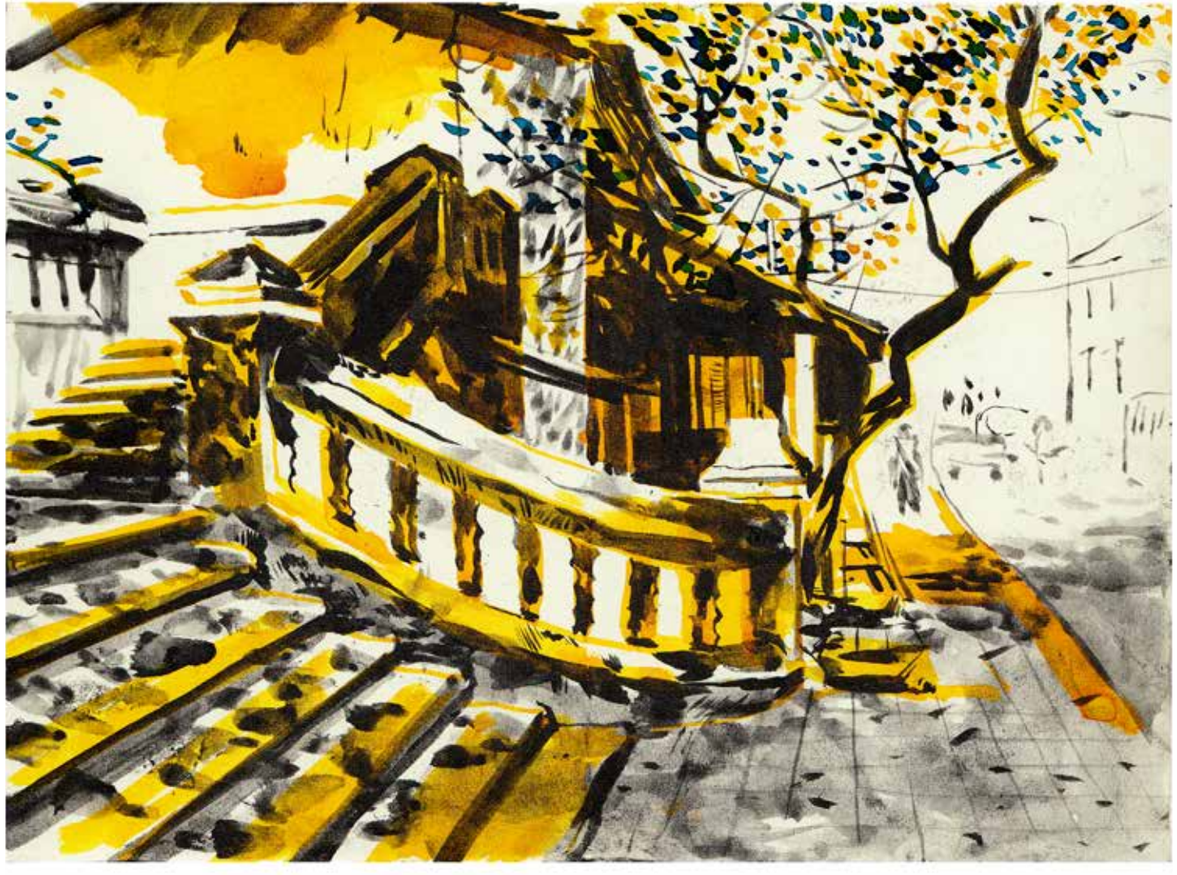
"So, do you want the car or the bike?" Olho para o carro preto, robusto, e para a frágil acelera e tento visualizar o caminho escuro nos dois sentidos, um dos quais será provavelmente regado a algo mais que gasolina. Ao menos o carro deve ter *airbags*. *"No, no, the bike is safer. The car is too big for the road, it's more dangerous."* Suponho que algumas lógicas de segurança estejam também sujeitas aos costumes de cada país. Seja o que Ganesh, o removedor de obstáculos, quiser.

Pendurado na acelera, vou tentando ouvir o Rahul a filosofar, sobre Goa, a Índia, as mulheres, espiritualidade e Verão. Esquecendo-se de olhar para a estrada, vai-se virando para trás enquanto me tenta explicar uma espécie de teoria unificada da mulher estrangeira, em gritos abafados pela velocidade. *"Andre, you have to come here in high season! Lots of yoga girls! I love yoga girls! They are sooooo complicated!!!"* Ri-se dos certificados de instrutor de ioga dados em quinze dias, da ânsia fútil do Ocidente pela iluminação oriental de supermercado. Das gentes que aqui vêm à procura, sem tempo para a descoberta.

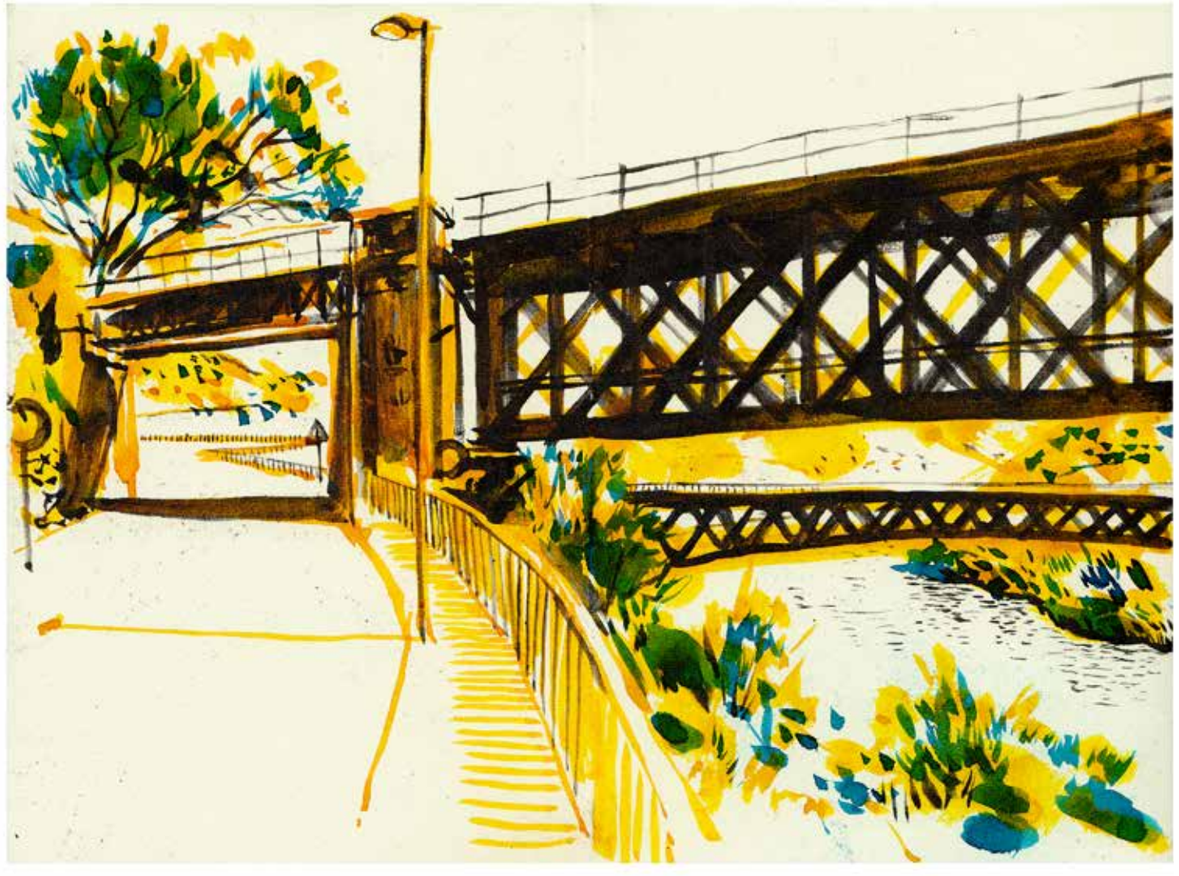
Realmente este pequeno périplo a Palolem só podia ser de mota. Assim as nossas gargalhadas correm livremente por entre a vegetação embrenhada na noite, dando-nos a ilusão de que os coqueiros se riem connosco. O riso faz-me fechar os olhos e relaxar, deixa-me ser conduzido. *"Tonight, Andre, I want to see some people! I want to see some complex faces!"*

Dito assim tudo parece simples.

Igreja da Imaculada Conceição, Panjim, Goa, Índia 05 Mai 2013



Rua Emídio Garcia, Panjim, Goa, Índia 06 Mai 2013



Ponte ferroviária internacional, Barca d'Alva, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

Ponte romana, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Portugal 07 Jul 2013

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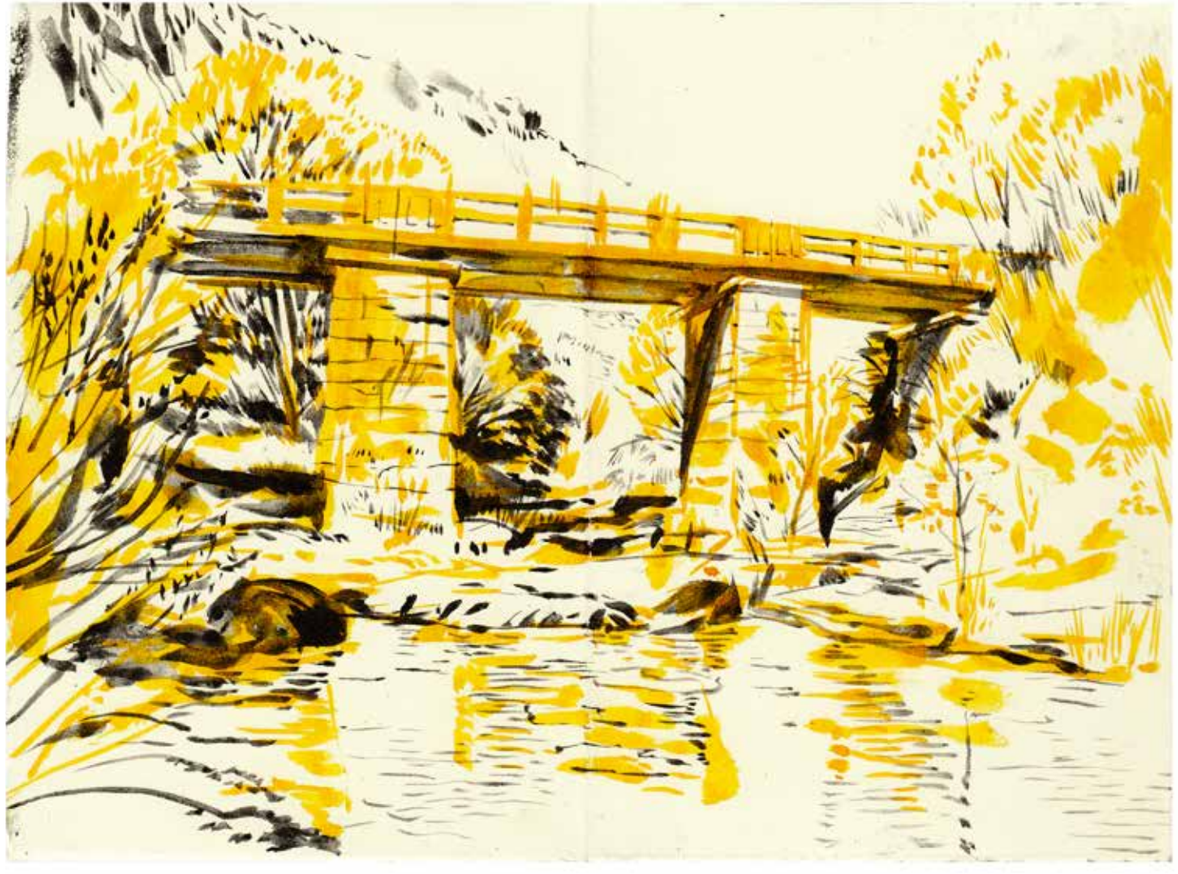

Ponte das Alminhas, Ribeira do Mosteiro, Trás-os-Montes, Portugal 25 Ago 2013

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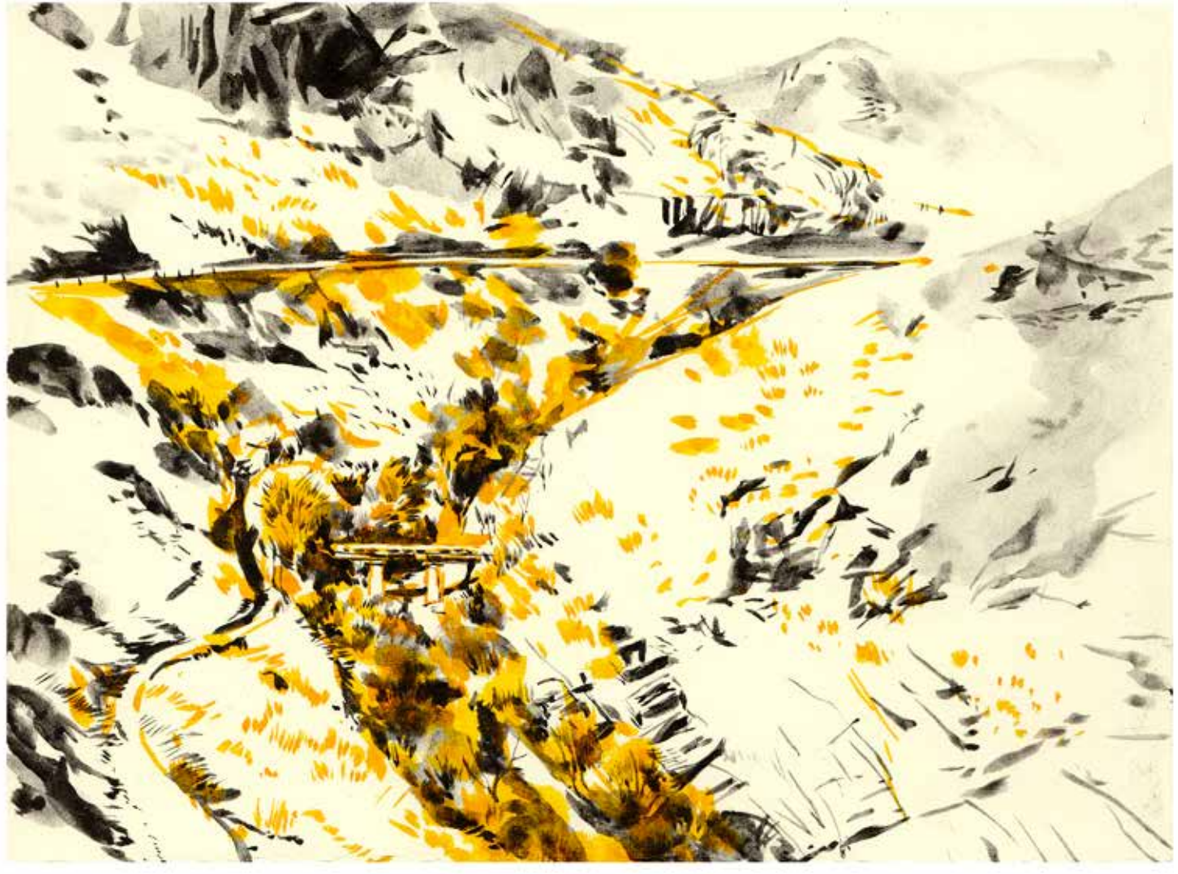
Rio Águeda, Douro Internacional, Portugal 26 Ago 2013



Ponte das Alminhas, Estrada do Candedo, Trás-os-Montes, Portugal 27 Ago 2013

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Em contrapartida, os textos são registos *a posteriori* de eventos, situações e reflexões cuja tradução em desenho seria demasiado morosa e despropositada no contexto em foram vividos.

Na palavra abysmo, é a forma do y
que lhe dá profundidade, escuridão, mistério...
Escrevê-la com i latino é fechar a boca do abysmo,
é transformá-lo numa superfície banal.
Teixeira de Pascoaes

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